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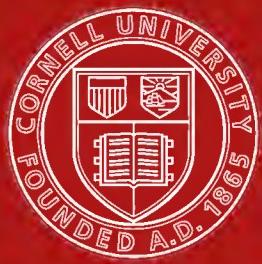
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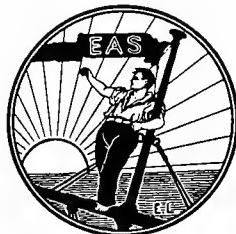
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BY

ADOLF PHILIPPI

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Fig. 1. Cathedral with Campanile, from the South.

## I. CONDITIONS OF FLORENTINE CULTURE.

FLORENCE, the City of Flowers, is wonderfully situated. Climb up to Fiesole in the early Spring, when nature is bare and grey in our cold North—up the green slopes between laurel and silvery olives and pointed, black cypresses, until you look down upon the marble-town with its cupolas and roofs, buried in a sea of blossoms,—and you will understand the name. From the opposite south-side, from S. Miniato across the Arno, you get the view of Florence against this wall of blossoming green. This town, enjoying all the blessing of nature, also takes first place in Italy as a habitation of modern man, especially since the changes of the last thirty years; it offers rest and enjoyment like no other town. Though without industries and noisy turmoil, Florence is not dead, like Venice and Pisa; she lives on the recollections of a glorious past and guards the treasures of her unique culture. What would Italy be without Florence—the cradle not only of Italian book-language, but of the literature of modern Europe! Eliminate all that is connected with Florence, from Dante to Giusti—what would be left? In Florence the writers of classic antiquity have

first been regenerated, read with eager and happy eyes, and made the basis of a new civilization. Then only could the men of science embark on their intellectual work which we certainly do not mean to hold in low esteem. But the fine arts of modern times have their home in Florence. Giotto and Masaccio are the first modern painters. Early Renaissance architecture is almost entirely Brunelleschi's creation, and if we Northerners may think a Renaissance church dispensable, we shall do well to remember that our modern dwelling-house would not exist, were it not for Brunelleschi's and his successors' Florentine palaces. We need houses, and we all love pictures. Most of us, who are not artists, regard sculpture more coolly; perhaps it is not wrong to hold the view, that it reached its zenith with the Greeks of whose mind it was the finest expression, whilst the art of our modern life is painting. The more praise is due to the Florentines of the early Renaissance for having again taken up sculpture, where the late Romanesque and early Gothic sculptors of France and Germany had left it. They might have proceeded on Pisan lines and followed the antique more closely; but instead of setting it up as model, they used it for correcting their own efforts, and where the antique nevertheless prevails, it is only in the superficial aspect and not in the essence which is the expression of innate, artistic realism, based on observation of and feeling for nature. Donatello is the stronger realist, Luca della Robbia has more soul. Ghiberti, their senior, is more clearly linked with the Gothic, though he soon leaves it so far behind that, with his feeling for form derived from the antique, he finds his personal style. In view of these three men's achievements their Gothic precursors are only historically important. Not since the days of the Greeks have the possibilities of plastic art been exhausted as they were in Florence, and the result of these 150 years—Florentine sculpture, culminating in Michelangelo—appears to us in every way worthy to rank with Greek sculpture. Then think of Leonardo's versatile genius, of Raphael's Florentine training, and of all Florence has given to the entire art of Italy, the apparently independent painting of the Venetians not excepted—and you will understand the oft repeated assertion, that after Athens no town has given us more and greater treasures of high culture, than Florence.

But, besides being poets and artists, these old Florentines were also men of excellent commonsense: good farmers and economists, clever merchants and successful bankers and masters of municipal government. At an early date we find well compiled statistics, well regulated taxation, and grand charitable institutions: hospitals, poor-houses, a foundling hospital built by no less a man than Brunelleschi. The numerous Italian terms of our business language testify even to-day, that at one time over thirty Florentine banks ruled the money-market of Europe.

How and in what kind of state could this civilization originate and thrive? Before listening to the voice of the monuments of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century town—a voice half dying away in many places—we must take a glimpse at the political life of the old Florentines. “The arts of peace cannot be gained without the work of soldier and statesman”. This is a favourite truism of ancient historians and philosophers, instanced by Periclean Athens which might well be called a great power in ancient Greece. Florence did not attain a similar position among the Italian states. Though more powerful than other civic republics and smaller principalities, like Mantua, Ferrara and Urbino, she did not equal the Venetian Republic, the Papal Curia, the Duchy of Milan and the Kingdom of Naples, notwithstanding her occasional importance as ally or opponent of either of these states. At times the Florentines seemed to be near the attainment of greater power, but they never reached this goal; and before the Renaissance had passed into senility, Florence played the miserable part of a Medicean Duchy or Grand-Duchy, dependent on the favours of Pope, Emperor or French King.

The national Florentine historians since Villani ascribe the complete political failure of their city to party-strife, and bemoan the evil fate which prevented their native town from taking its due position in the system of Italian states. The same sentiment is echoed by the poets, wherever they touch upon public affairs. Looking back upon it after the lapse of centuries the tumultuous internal history of Florence, appears but too often as sheer purposeless turmoil. Our historionomers tell us, that this political life was necessary as basis for an independent civilization, and the mental disposition of a princeless people on which the Florentines prided themselves seems to have benefited art. But the political life in itself was a fiasco, as we shall have repreated occasion to impress upon our readers. Such unstable politics could not prevail against states guided by a firm hand. The vitality of a civic republic is confined to fixed limits: beyond these limits it was at a disadvantage against the concentrated power of a firmly ruled state. Venice under her iron rule had an additional advantage over Florence: her infinitely better position by the sea, far from the Italian battle-fields.

Florence, situated in the valley of the scarcely navigable Arno—far less favourably than her rival, the civic republic of Siena on a commanding height, or Pisa near her seaport—had to struggle for centuries with the difficult but vital task of subjugating the towns of the upper and middle Arno valley and the countless fortified castles of the feudal lords. For many years these frontier-wars constitute the history of her “foreign” relations. Bad natural communications interfered with the developement of the town as a commercial centre. Her early flourishing industry depended on imported raw materials: wool, silk,

skins and furs; it could not be kept alive, unless great practical ingenuity could remove the obstacles to intercourse. The town had a modest market, just for the surrounding towns and villages—no staple-place for foreign wares, like Venice or Genua. The Florentine merchant had to go abroad to establish business connections, to Flanders, to London and Russia; the banker had to weave a net of branches over the capitals of Italy and the North, before Florence could become the centre of European finance.

The accomplishment of this work demanded strong and capable men. The Florentines said that their rough air produced clear heads and sharp, critical noses. Energy and hard work were essential for success. The very products of field and garden had to be wrenched from the hilly soil. Throughout ancient Roman history Tuscany had guarded the character of her race, and Florence in particular, originally an Etruscan colony, was proud of her descent from a race that was only slowly, and even then only nominally, conquered by Rome. If Papal Rome claimed to be the head of Italy and of the world, Florentine orators and ambassadors boasted of their unvanquished Tuscan blood, and the defiant *rustica* fronts of their palaces were rightly held to continue the Cyclopean walling of the ancient Etruscan towns. Perhaps the influx of Northern, German blood during the early middle ages, at least in the upper classes, had its effective share, though the National historians are loth to admit it. Compared with the refined, stately Roman, the Tuscan is somewhat boorish, even in appearance. Even on 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes the splendid groups of *cittadini* seem sometimes a little old-fashioned, stiff, and worthy, very different from the Venetians; and when the Florentines believed to have attained the highest degree of the refinement of town-life, public opinion in Italy was still critical on this subject. They were not sufficiently chivalrous; useful in war, but not soldiers born, and they did not look their best in the lists; they savoured of the merchant and industrial, of the newly knighted peasant. But they held undisputed sway over Italian literature, even after the splendour of the Roman cinquecento had commenced to overshadow Florence. The balance is thus here, too, in favour of "the arts of peace".

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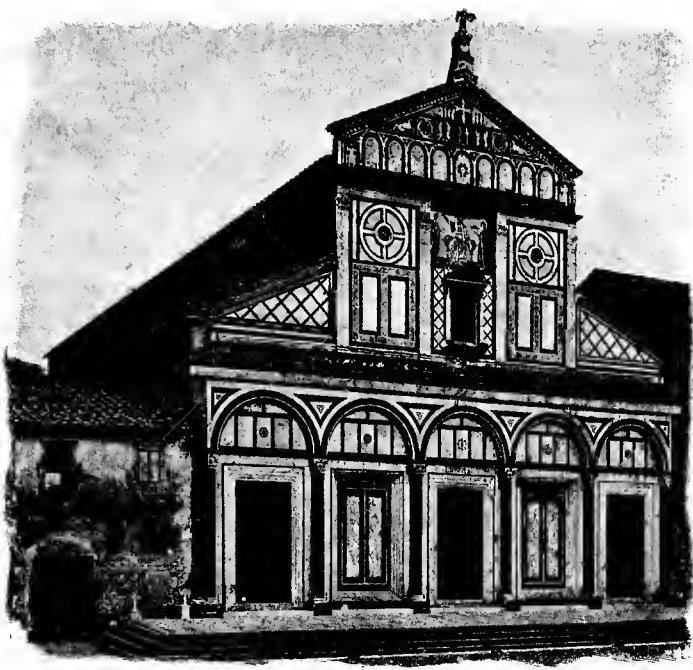


Fig. 2. S. Miniato.

## II. HISTORY OF THE TOWN UNTIL ABOUT 1300.

### THE BADIA. S. MINIATO. SS. APOSTOLI. THE BAPTISTERY.

UNTIL well into the 12<sup>th</sup> century Florence is an unimportant town, mentioned in history only when passed or entered by German Kings on their progress to Rome. Charlemagne came in 781 on his return from Rome, and we have evidence of a donation made by him to the monastery of S. Miniato; in 786 he celebrates Christmas again in Florence. The Longobard Duke is deposed and replaced by a Franconian Count. Already before 854 the Bishoprics of Florence and Fiesole form one county under a vice-regent appointed by the Imperial margraves of Tuscany, who reside in Lucca. One of these, *Hugo*, of Provençal descent, becomes very powerful and takes the young Emperor Otto III. under his protection. Somewhat legendary historical accounts make him a great hero, supposed to have come with the Emperor from Germany. His mother Willa in 978 founds a Benedictine Monastery, the *Badia*, which to this day stands in the Via del Proconsolo. Margrave Hugo, Dante's *gran barone*, who died in 1001, is buried there, and the anniversary of his death is still celebrated at the Badia.

But the building is completely changed. At the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century a Gothic church was erected in the abbey. Remains of old tombs can be seen in the cloisters. The church was completely modernized in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It contains a delightful early "Vision of St. Bernard" by Filippino Lippi (fig. 3), and some early renaissance sculptures, notably two tombs by Mino da Fiesole. One of these (1481) holds the remains of Hugo (fig. 4). An antique porphyry sarcophagus, from which they were transferred, has disappeared.



Fig. 3. The Vision of St. Bernard, by Filippino Lippi. Badia.

Soon after Hugo's death Otto's successor Henry II. came to Italy. On his second progress to Rome he was joined in Florence by Bishop Hildebrand who gained the Emperor's protection and support for re-founding the monastery of S. Miniato across the Arno; the marble church was commenced at that time—earlier than has hitherto been believed—and was consecrated in 1018. A pious deception had to conceal the fact, that the body of the martyr Miniatus had been removed to Metz at the time of Otto I.

S. Miniato belongs to a group of Tuscan Romanesque churches, the most splendid example of which is the Duomo of Pisa (1063), and as far as the more important buildings are concerned, the Florentine church must now be placed first in date. Its fame is chiefly due to the charmingly inlaid marble-façade

(fig. 2). It is very simple: dead arcature on half-columns and corner pilasters below; plain moulding on flat pilasters above, then a pediment. No plastic decoration on round columns, as in Pisa: only flat, architectural patterns of pleasing effect. This quiet, clear arrangement, which is echoed in the interior, suggests certain antique buildings. But the antique was not copied, though it was well known and comprehended. The interior of the church which was already finished in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, is designed like an early Christian basilica with three naves; the two aisles have a flat ceiling, and the nave an open rafter-roof with an inscription dated 1357 resting on two transverse arches above two pairs of half-columns. They divide the nave into three rectangular sections, in each of which two pairs of columns support round-arched arcades. The arches are encrusted with alternating green and white marble slabs, the capitals partly antique, the pilasters and columns of the nave covered with stucco. Only the four columns of the last orthogon are antique monoliths. They pierce the vaulting of a rather high crypt below the highly raised choir, and go right down to the floor; 28 Romanesque columns (12 with antique capitals) support the vaulted roof of the crypt. This connection of the raised choir with the nave, caused probably by the length of the antique columns, is clumsily effected, and the construction of the whole church is rather poor, although the effect, with the semi-circular tribuna as background and the rich marble decoration right down to the floor, is original or at least picturesque. The tower is the work of Baccio d'Agnolo (1519).

The neat execution of the interior is very pleasing. We shall later refer to Spinello Aretino's frescoes and to the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal.



Fig. 4. Tomb of Hugo, by Mino da Fiesole. Badia.

For the present it will suffice to mention the exquisite marble *Cappella del Crocifisso* in the nave before the choir. It was erected for Piero di Medici, Cosimo's son, by Michelozzo, and shows this artist's characteristic leaning towards the antique. The coffered ceiling is by Luca della Robbia, and the whole was finished in 1448. According to a still existing document the son of the first citizen of Florence received permission in that year to fix his device on the



Fig. 5. S. Miniato, View towards the Choir.

frieze, on condition that above it should be placed the eagle of the *Calimala*, the guild which was in charge of S. Miniato, and to which the Medici then belonged.

Having thus become acquainted with S. Miniato, which is typical for the pre-Gothic churches of Florence, we shall be able to appreciate the charming, small, three-naved basilica of *SS. Apostoli* (fig. 6). In its construction it is considerably older than S. Miniato, probably of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, since it was endowed with relics by one of the Emperors Charles. The plan and apse have survived,

as well as some green marble columns from the neighbouring antique thermae, and other details. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century a barrel-vault was constructed over the nave, the windows were enlarged, the sides received flat cupolas, and the decoration was tastefully completed by Renaissance artists. The contents of the church need not be mentioned.

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Margrave Hugo, who died childless (1001), was succeeded by Willa's grand-nephew Boniface, father of *Matilda*, in whose castle-yard at Canossa Henry IV.



Fig. 6. SS. Apostoli, View towards the Choir.

afterwards stood as penitent (1077). Boniface had been raised to the rank of Margrave of Tuscany under Henry II., and had married Beatrix, daughter of Duke Frederic of Upper Lorraine. After her first husband's death (1052), she married Godfrey of Upper Lorraine, who induced her to embark on a policy hostile to the Emperor who had robbed him of his Duchy in 1048. On his second progress to Rome (1055) Henry III. entered Florence, and forced the Countess to follow him to Germany, whence she returned to Florence after the Emperor's death (1056), accompanied by her daughter Matilda, the only surviving child of her first marriage. The town was now lost for the Imperial cause, and Countess Matilda became the most embittered enemy of the Emperor's

son. When she died in 1115, she had survived both the men who made her name immortal in history: her Papal protector Gregory VII. and their mutual enemy Henry IV. Her cause was victorious, and Florence sided with the Pope against the Emperor. The town had thus entered the sphere of world-policy; again and again she was to choose between liberty and foreign rule, with the third possibility of having to suffer, or even to beg for, a tyrant appointed by the Pope or the French King of Naples, so that the ill-treatment might at least be received from Italian hands. Matilda's lands were a chief object of contention between Emperor and Pope for the next 100 years. She had bequeathed them to the Holy See, but only Otto IV. left them definitely to the Pope.

On this ground Florence not only became involved in the great war which stirred up all Italy, but also carried on its particular struggle with the surrounding towns: with Siena for territorial extension, and with the neighbouring feudal lords, like the Alberti and Guido Guerra, the claims of the community or of the bishopric being advanced as a pretext against the Imperial cause. Fiesole was captured and partially destroyed in 1125 after several years' struggle; Empoli fell in 1182. The war between Emperor and Pope touched Florence, when Frederic *Barbarossa* first came to Italy (1154). Compared with the events of the next decades on the Lombard plain or in Rome, these Florentine affairs are only episodes, but they were of the utmost importance for the little state, since they procured it the paramount position in Tuscany.

At first, when the Emperor went to Rome to be crowned, Florence closed her gates to him (1155). When he subjected Milan on his second campaign (1162), the Tuscan towns had to obey and assist him and to abandon their own struggles. When the Emperor had to fly in 1168, the war between the towns recommenced, and civil war broke out in Florence between the Emperor's adherents, led by the Uberti, and the followers of the Pope. Florence was fortunate: she gained internal strength and extended her sway over the *contrada*, in spite of party-strife. But on his sixth Italian campaign Barbarossa again invaded Tuscany and entered Florence in 1185. All Tuscan towns, except Pisa and Pistoja, had to abandon their territorial acquisitions outside the city-walls. The Alberti and other partisans of the Emperor rebuilt their castles: the wheel had turned. Under Barbarossa's strong son Henry VI. Florence almost became an Imperial town (1194); his brother Phillip ruled Tuscany as Margrave. An immediate change set in on the Emperor's early and sudden death (1197), which was preceded by Phillip's resignation. He was the last Margrave of Tuscany and with him this title became extinct. All Tuscan towns, except Imperial Pisa, combined in the presence of Cardinal Pandulfo, a Papal envoy, to form a Tuscan alliance under the leadership of Florence (1198). During the next years Florence recovered parts of the *contrada* from the Alberti, whose castle

Semifonte had to surrender, and from her old rival Siena. A wise Pope, Innocent III., had ascended the Papal throne in 1198. When he placed the Imperial crown on the head of the Guelph Otto IV., the lands of Matilda were finally given to him. That the king on his progress to Rome had put Florence under the ban of the Empire, was not of much consequence. Though the Imperial cause was by no means lost in Italy, the times did not return, when a German Emperor could rule over Florence, although such was the hope of a strong party of the town; and with this commences a new page of Florentine history.

The modest state had now become a power. Fate had imposed upon it as a first task an endless succession of frontier-wars, on the results of which its very existence depended. Its position in the heart of Tuscany, once its weakness, had now become its strength and advantage. In the natural course of events the neighbouring minor towns were bound to come in, and the two largest cities, too strong perhaps as yet for Florence, Pisa and Siena, were too distant to force her out of her natural sphere of power, so that the sway over Tuscany was assured to her already at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The history of this century has to deal with the *internal* strife between the *great families*, leading eventually to external wars, and with the developement of a *constitution*, finally decided by the *guilds* of the people.

The Matildan question had been settled, but the struggle between Emperor and Pope was not at rest. The opponents in this historical struggle called themselves *Guelphs* and *Ghibellines*. The division and the names of the parties remained, even when the dispute had nothing to do with Emperor and Pope. *Guelph* and *Ghibelline* stood for all serious differences between the factions of the various towns, family feuds, personal affairs, and municipal questions. In Florence the object of these struggles was mastery over the town. The Guelphs could not even maintain that their's was the cause of liberty which they were frequently ready to give up to the Pope or to the French. Only the citizens who after hard struggles broke the power of the nobles, made Florence a free Republic, until the Medici became her masters.

In the same year in which Frederic II. was crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle, a struggle of extreme fierceness arose between the noble families in Florence. The events of this year 1215 brought about, it is said, the division between *Ghibellines* and *Guelphs*. As before, the Ghibellines were led by the Uberti, whilst the most powerful Guelph partisans were the Donati and the Buondelmonti. The chroniclers give long lists of names on both sides. But as far back as 1177 we know of similar street-fights between the families whose towered houses resembled fortresses, ready to resist and repulse a besieging host. Up to 35 towers are mentioned, but there must have been three times that number, and

the less important families combined in groups known as *Società delle Torre*. In 1215 the cause of the struggle was a love affair. A Buondelmonti, a proud, brave man, betrothed to a lady of the Ghibelline Amidei family, broke his engagement and married a Donati. He was killed in open fight by his opponents, near a little church (destroyed by fire in 1304) at Por S. Maria, facing the Ponte Vecchio.

For a long time, while Frederic II. was victorious, the Ghibellines had the best of it, and just before his death the Guelphs were driven from the town.

After his death (1250) the Guelphs returned, and under their influence the town received a more democratic constitution, the *Popolo Vecchio*. Town and country were divided into *Bandiere* (districts of the Militia companies) and placed under a *Capitano del popolo* who had to be a foreigner, like (since 1207) the *podestà* who is first mentioned in 1184. Both had a General and a Special Council and held judicial power, whilst legislature and administration were entrusted to twelve elders (*anziani*). This constitution only lasted ten years. The Ghibellines had been exiled in 1258 and had gone to Siena. Assisted by the Ghibelline Sienese and a troop of 800 horsemen sent by King Manfred, they routed the Florentine Guelphs at Montaperti (1260). Florence would have been destroyed, had not Farinata degli Uberti, the head of the



Fig. 7. Farinata degli Uberti,  
by Andrea del Castagno. S. Apollonia.

Ghibellines, saved his native town (fig. 7). But the Guelphs were exiled, and the Ghibellines ruled for nearly seven years. After Manfred's defeat and death at Benevento (1266), Conrardin crossed the Alps in the following year; Charles of Anjou sent reinforcements to the Florentine Guelphs, and the Ghibellines left Florence of their own free will. The Florentines now bestowed the lordship of their town for ten years upon King Charles whom the Pope appointed Vicar of Tuscany. A new official body was created, which was to gain much influence in the future: the *Capitani of the Parte Guelfa*, whose first task was the administration of Ghibelline property. Cardinal Ubaldini thought that the Ghibellines were not likely

to return, if their possessions were distributed—and he was right, for, although they came back repeatedly, their power was a thing of the past. Nor did the Guelphs remain in peace among themselves. The continuous fights proved that the nobles were unfit for government, and the commonwealth came into power.

The year 1282 brought a new constitution, the essential foundations of which were not affected by future changes. This *Secondo Popolo* gave political powers to the ancient *guilds* which formed the basis of the new constitution.

Trade guilds, seven in number, are first mentioned in 1193, i. e. before the *Primo Popolo* and strangely enough just at the time when the Ghibellines were in power under Henry VI. At that time the guild deputies—one elected by each guild—fixed the statutes, a function which was generally fulfilled by the consuls of the town. Unfortunately we are not told which were these seven guilds. It would be most natural to think of the seven "Greater" guilds (*arti maggiori*) which are mentioned soon after, but one of the most influential of these, the "merchants of the *Calimala*" was certainly not among them.

Between 1266 and the establishment of the *Secondo Popolo* (1282) there were not only the seven Greater Guilds (Calimala, Wool, Money Changers, Judges and Notaries, Silk merchants, Furriers, Doctors and Druggists), but also the first five of the later fourteen Lesser Guilds. These five were sometimes counted with the other nine Minor, sometimes with the seven Greater Guilds, so that there was the possibility of three degrees of power within the guilds, although sometimes they had equal political rights. But nobody who did not belong to some guild, could now take office, so that even the nobles were forced to join a guild. Therein lay the importance of the constitution of 1282.

The *podestà*, as highest judicial authority, and the *capitano del popolo*, as highest military authority, were elected annually. The state affairs were conducted by the *Signoria*, elected every other month and consisting first of six, then of eight members who were chosen first from three out of the seven, then from all the seven Greater Guilds, and subsequently from twelve guilds. They were called *priori*, a title which had already been given in 1202—3 to the "rectors" of the guilds. The proposals of the *priori* had to pass quite a number of legislative bodies: three *consigli* who formed together a fourth instance, the "General" Council. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century foreign affairs were submitted to two further Councils, before they reached the other three. This constitution was not entirely new in its details, and was subsequently considerably modified. Important changes were introduced in 1293. Giano della Bella, a noble, arbitrary Florentine of an old Guelph family limited the rights of the *grandi* in favour of the people and the guilds. For a time he was so popular and influential, that his innovations might have led to an entirely

democratic rule, or even to a tyranny; but he succumbed to a counter-revolution, and when he went into exile in 1295, only one of his institutions remained: the office of a bi-monthly *gonfaloniere della giustizia* at the head of a considerable military command for the protection of the supremacy of the people. Gradually the gonfaloniere became the chief of the priors, and these seven or nine men finally constituted the most important magistracy.

Nothing could be more involved than this Florentine constitution, the details of which the reader shall be spared. It was effected by anxious caution, far reaching distrust and a small addition of practical wisdom. As many as possible were to have a say in it, so that the power of the individual should be made harmless. If the executive had to be entrusted to three men, they were all surrounded by Councillors and restricted by limitations, and everything proceeded very slowly. The deliberateness of the Florentines, which had become proverbial at an early date and had been ridiculed already by Dante, was here embodied in a system which was ever at a disadvantage, when opposed to a firm will, and was frequently unable to cope with the quick and ready diplomacy of the Popes.

Florentine statecraft had at least devised a means of abrogating the formalities of their constitution. At times the Special and General Councils could be suspended and replaced by a committee with extraordinary powers, a *Balia*, proposed by the gonfaloniere and elected by the acclamation of an accidentally gathered crowd. Party leaders and those in power resorted to this means whenever it suited them. Later it led to the establishment of special Councils of "Ten" and of "Eight", at first to decide on war matters, and afterwards endowed with special powers in foreign affairs and matters connected with rates, taxes and police.

The military organisation was equally unwieldy, the levying of troops slow, and the whole warfare of the Florentines as ponderous as the ox-waggon on which the banner of the town was carried into battle. We must not be deceived by their chroniclers with their exaggerated accounts of unimportant events, in which these expeditions against Siena or Pisa appear as heroic deeds, for the narrators lose all sense of proportion, if it is a question of Italian fighting Italian. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century war in Italy was carried on more and more by mercenaries, and the *condottieri* were leaders who found it in their interest, not to lead their men to death, but to take them in full strength from one affair to the next. But in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as soon as considerable German and French armies appeared, and the Swiss lansquenets set to work, war became serious and torrents of blood were shed. Even at an earlier time, if some small troop of Imperial horsemen could not sustain street-fighting against the overwhelming forces of the townsmen, they offered battle in the open field,

because they knew full well, that they would not be followed; and when they wanted to return, they found the gates closed and could not take the town without siege equipments. Only thus could the Italians successfully resist the Imperial armies which could not transport war engines across the Alps, and on the other hand they were useful allies who could supply war-material, arms and stores, and who knew the tricks of warfare of their countrymen. In open battle the foreign knights could hold their own. The Florentines themselves generally chose foreign captains as leaders. The growing democracy was no soil for military genius, and the warlike nobles preferred to annihilate each other.

Unfortunately we cannot view the politics of Florence through the eyes of her historians; we cannot consider her important either in peace or in war, and find it only natural, that so confused a state could not acquire a powerful position in Italy, like Venice and the three monarchies. The Republic produced but few great statesmen, like Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, or Guicciardini and Machiavelli who was also well aware of her military weaknesses, though his knowledge came too late. Greatness we can only find in Florentine culture, and it is most strange that this was based entirely on, and ended with, civic freedom. What the citizens of Florence failed to achieve in politics, they made up for in culture. Their exuberant strength found expression in architecture. A succession of powerful Gothic buildings arose: In 1255 the palace of the podestà, in 1298 the palace of the priors, in 1278 and 1294 the churches of S. Maria Novella and S. Croce, in 1296 the new Cathedral.

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The site of the present Cathedral had for centuries been occupied by the older episcopal church, dedicated to the martyr *St. Reparata* of Cesarea. To the West of its front was, since about 1040, a hospital of St. John. Then came the Baptistry of *S. Giovanni*, the early days of which are veiled in darkness. According to Carlo Strozzi, the lost books of the Calimala (whose consuls were in charge of the temple at least since 1157) stated, that *S. Giovanni* served until 1128 as episcopal church, but its plan renders this theory improbable and proves that the building has certainly never been anything but a baptismal church. From ancient times the basilica of *S. Lorenzo* (consecrated in 393) belonged to the Bishop, as did *S. Reparata* after the removal of the body of *S. Zenobius* to that church which was completed before the year 1000; but the bishopric had its name from the patron of the town, *St. John the Baptist*.

*S. Reparata* or, as it was commonly called, *S. Liperata*, was a three-naved basilica of the Florentine type which we know from *S. Miniato*, with a raised choir over the crypt, and a campanile; its length is calculated to have been

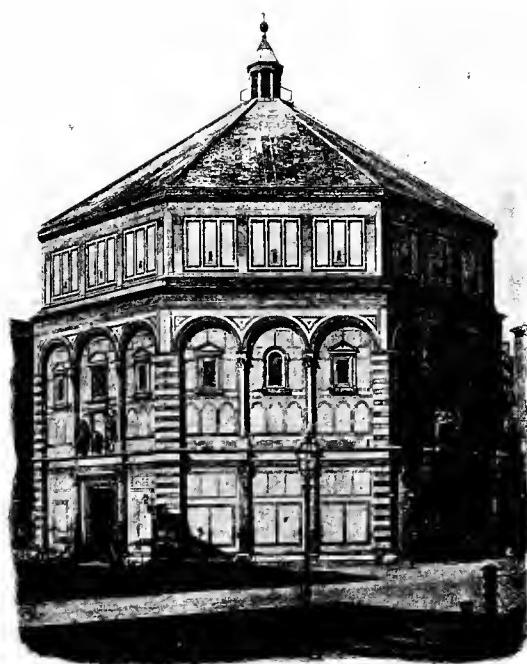


Fig. 8. Baptistry.

not quite half that of the Duomo. When the erection of the Duomo was decided upon in 1294, the intention was not to build an entirely new edifice, but an extension at the back of S. Reparata. The building was commenced on the West side and the old church was demolished piece meal. The hospital of St. John was removed to another district and gradually the Duomo was given its far greater dimensions.

For some time the octagonal cupola building of the Baptistery (fig. 8) was credited to the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century. But the power of the Tuscan architects of that period was insufficient for so capable an effort. Compared with this vault, Diotisalvi's steep,

conical vault which, since 1153, covers the Pisan Baptistery, without lateral pressure, the full weight pressing down vertically, looks decidedly awkward. The unknown architect of the Florence cupola still followed the traditions of ancient Christian times and of antiquity: his work belongs to the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century. But the entire facing, inside and out, is much later: it was commenced in the interior about 1190, barely 50 years before the first appearance of Gothic in Florence, and the outside was only completed in the century of the early Renaissance, after 1470. Yet the work is entirely harmonious and evidently inspired by the same spirit. Each worker understood, and wanted to do justice to, his predecessor, giving at the same time of his best. The stone is weather-worn, the mosaic decoration of the interior has partially turned dull and dark; destruction and bad restoration are evident in all decorative parts; nor is the work always as exact, as a sensitive eye would like. Yet through all these flaws the attentive student will be struck by the severe earnestness which here prevailed and kept away all arbitrary ornamentation.

The *interior* decoration (fig. 9) is connected with an alteration. After 1200 a former outer hall was changed into its present shape to accommodate the altar, and the entrance was transferred to the East side, facing the Duomo.

The sides of the octagon are framed by corner pilasters, between each pair of which are placed two antique bronze columns, most of which have antique capitals. Pilasters and columns support a moulding which forms the basis of the upper storey. Corresponding with the pilasters and columns below, this upper storey has Corinthian pilasters. The sections of the walls enclosed by each pair of pilasters show two round arches divided by a small Ionic column on a high socle. Between these socles and the pilasters extends the casement.

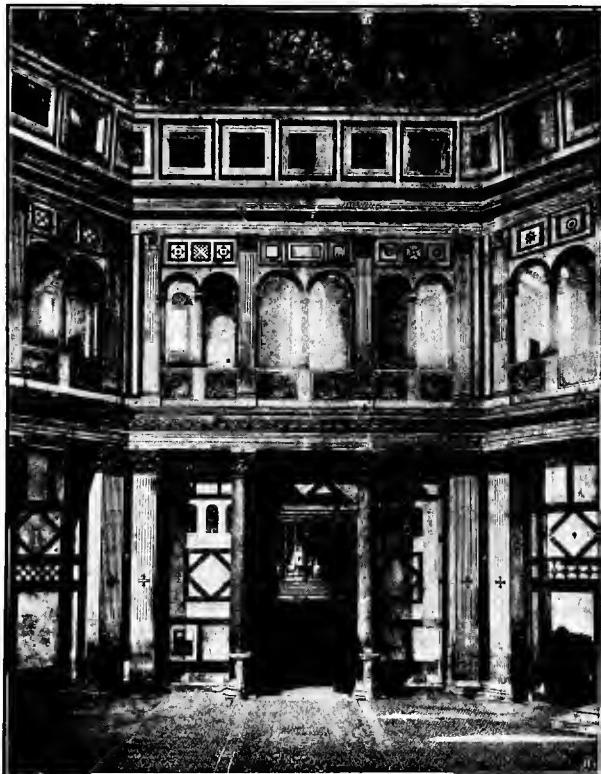


Fig. 9. Baptistry, Interior.

The pilasters carry a cornice, above which is an attic, and then the vault. The walls are clad in green and white marble. On the *outer* building the green and white marble corner piers are by the maestro del Duomo Arnolfo (1293). The outer walls are arranged in two stories, each divided by two pilasters. Above the upper storey is an attic, as in the interior. But the sections do not correspond with those of the interior, the outer walls being raised above the basis of the cupola. The lower storey is crowned by a straight line, the upper storey has round arches and above them a straight white frame turned down at the corners and resting on Arnolfo's piers. Over it all is a



Fig. 10. Tomb of John XXIII., by Donatello and Michelozzo. Baptistry.

figure by Donatello\*), and a repulsively realistic, wooden Magdalen of Donatello's latest period.

The three entrance porches were closed by bronze-gates, the exemplary achievements of the late Gothic and the early Renaissance periods.

\* Donatello has also had a share in the rest of the work on this monument.

plain frieze and moulding. Plain, small windows are let into the wall, some rectangular, some round-arched, but they give little light to the interior. The walls are decorated with marble slabs, richer between the blind arcades, than on the lower storey. In the flat marble decoration of the attic, the division of the stories into three sections is repeated. A small window is let into each centre panel. The chief cornice by Antonio Rossellino (1471) completes the external artistic decoration. The lantern on the roof has replaced an older one, mentioned in 1150. The three gates did not form part of the original design and were only added, when the altar was transferred in 1202 to the former entrance-side.

When the East front of the Duomo was incrusted, the outer decoration of the Baptistry was taken as example (not vice-versa!). The interior of the Baptistry had to undergo many a change. Thus the octagonal font in the centre, in which Dante had been baptised, was removed by order of the second Grand-Duke on the occasion of the preparations for the christening of his firstborn (1576). But some works of art have also been introduced: the tomb of Pope John XXIII. (fig. 10) by Michelozzo, with the recumbent bronze



Fig. II. Piazza Pitti.

### III. THE THREE WALLS. THE SQUARES. IMPRESSIONS OF THE TOWN.

THE old, inner city is situated on the Northern bank of the Arno. It forms a fairly regular square with generally straight streets. Its boundaries West and North are Via Tornabuoni and Via de' Cerretani, so that the Cathedral Square is enclosed. From its North-Eastern corner the oldest circuit turns along Via del Proconsolo southwards to the Piazza dei Giudici, then westwards across the present Uffizi towards the Borgo SS. Apostoli, which was outside the former South-wall, until it meets the Piazza S. Trinità between the Spini and Bartolini palaces.

Thus this oldest town, whose walls have disappeared long since, did not extend to the Arno in the South. The other three sides were surrounded by a moat, the place of which is now taken by the Vie del Proconsolo, Cerretani and Tornabuoni. Through the West moat a natural water-course joined the Arno near Ponte S. Trinità. The town had four quarters, from each of which a principal gate opened in the four directions of the compass. Beyond the gates we find at an early date churches approached through a suburban line of streets, a *borgo* which is generally named after a church. The Porta del Duomo, the gate of the Northern quarter *del Duomo*, was to the North-West of the Baptistry, at the commencement of the Borgo S. Lorenzo which is first mentioned in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and led to the far older church of the same name. The Western quarter had its name from the outer church of S. Pancrazio; the gate was, where Via

degli Strozzi meets Via Tornabuoni. In the South Via Por S. Maria, leading towards the Ponte Vecchio—the only bridge of the old town—has retained the name of the old gate. The church of S. Maria, after which gate and quarter were named, was destroyed by fire in 1304. This gate led westwards through the Borgo SS. Apostoli to the suburban churches of the Apostoli and Trinità. The East-gate, S. Piero, led from the quarter of S. Piero to S. Pier Maggiore through the present Borgo degli Albizzi—then Borgo S. Piero, and first mentioned in 1090.

This circuit remained from Roman times down to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. All that is left of that period is the Baptistery, the foundations of the Badia, and a few insignificant fragments. We only know the chief lines of the oldest ground-plan of the city. The Gothic and Renaissance periods filled it with new buildings, after the second, somewhat wider circuit of walls had been completed. We are told that these walls were commenced in the East in 1172 and finished in the West in 1175. They were thus erected after the conquest of Fiesole and during the struggle with Barbarossa.

The town now reaches beyond the Arno, but only within a narrow stretch between the Ponte alla Carraja and the small church of S. Lucia dei Magnoli, embracing S. Spirito, but not the Carmelite church and the Pitti place. On the North side of the Arno it now extends from the Ponte alla Carraja to the Piazza d'Arno. The full course of the walls is the following: from the Ponte alla Carraja in a straight line North-East to the Piazza Madonna and Via Canto de' Nelli, including thus the churches of S. Trinità, S. Pancrazio and S. Lorenzo. Then a sharp turn to the South-East in the direction of Via de' Pucci and Via S. Egidio to the Piazza S. Piero, so that the Borgo S. Piero now forms part of the city. From the Piazza S. Piero due South to the river: Borgo de' Greci is added to the town, but Piazza S. Croce remains outside. Further South the wall encloses with a projecting angle a little place, where the church "between the tombs" was situated, the Piazza S. Jacopo tra Fossi. A moat went again round the second circuit, joining the river in the East near the Piazza d'Arno; in the West the course of the Mugnone was diverted further westwards from the Piazza Madonna, so that it joined the river near the Ponte alla Carraja (Via de' Fossi!). The part beyond the Arno had no moat. Even then the town had only one bridge, until the Ponte alla Carraja was commenced in 1218.

Compared with the *third* and last circuit of walls, which was thought of a good hundred years later, this second extension is modest and cautious: only just as much, as could be defended. Between the third and second walls were large tracts of land; within the second everything was soon built over. Instead of the four quarters there were now six *sestieri* (mentioned first in 1194): Oltrarno is new, and Por S. Maria is divided into two districts—the

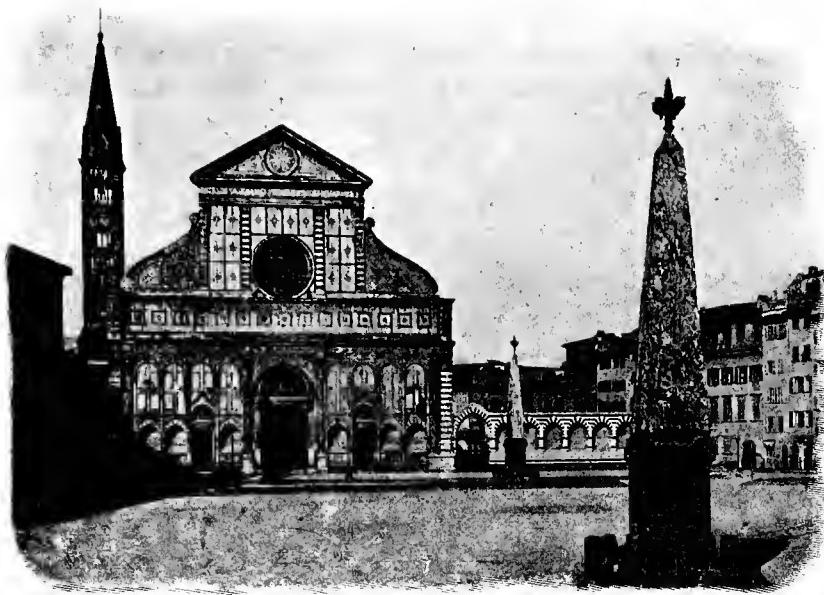


Fig. 12. Piazza S. Maria Novella.

Western called Borgo SS. Apostoli, and the Eastern after the imposing church of S. Piero by the "scheraggio" (conduit), which had to be demolished, when the Uffizi were completed. Whilst the first circuit had four principal and five minor gates, the second had 13 North of the Arno alone. Some were in a line with the old gate, others at the fork of two roads meeting at the old gate.

All these gates and walls of the first two circuits have disappeared long since. They had to fall after the erection of the final, outer walls which were only pulled down since 1865, to make room for splendid, broad promenades, the present *Viali di Circonvallazione*. The beginning of this extensive circuit of fortifications dates back to the time of a grand, political forward-movement, a few years after the establishment of the *Secondo Popolo* (1282). The completion of the work took well over a hundred years, and by the time it was finished the rule of the Albizzi had commenced (1381). In architecture this is the Gothic period, when the big churches were planned, and the Bargello, the Signory palace, Or San Michele, the Loggia de' Lanzi and many more buildings; when the streets were paved with stone-slabs instead of the former bricks. The gates of this last circuit are preserved, at least in their changed state (since 1529), but they are far away from the town in which we are interested, and do not affect her character, like those of Rome or Verona. The area of this outer circle is enormously extended; the streets are very long and as a rule broader. Between them are vast open spaces with plantations and

fine gardens. Beyond this circuit is a modern town with villas and palaces which, however, are frequently uninhabited, as this latest building-phase has brought many disappointments. We have not much to do with these districts. At the time, with which we are concerned, most of these parts were open fields. Artistic life proceeded from the heart of the city, in the narrowness of which every bit of space was utilised, and many a small thoroughfare has still retained some of this throbbing life. Beyond the second circuit the blood flows only in isolated veins towards a comparatively small number of artistic creations, for which the space within the walls would not have sufficed.

The two most beautiful *Squares* are the Piazza S. Maria Novella (fig. 12) in the West, and S. Croce in the East, the latter unfortunately spoilt by a modern Dante monument with an insignificant statue and four little lions—or rather monkey-faced dogs—at the corners (fig. 13). The large Square before the convent of St. Mark in the North-East is empty and without special character. The neighbouring Square of the Annunziata is again distinguished by an important architectural setting (Foundling Hospital, etc.) but is unfortunately disfigured by a poor late equestrian statue of Ferdinand I. by Giambologna. The small Piazza S. Maria Nuova in the East, near the line of the second circuit, with its noteworthy buildings presents a fine, historical picture. The busy little place before the church of S. Lorenzo within the second circuit in the North, is still very effective, in spite of all neglect (fig. 16). In one corner of the Square another of the many superfluous Medici monuments attracts attention, a by no means beautiful seated figure of Giovanni delle Bande Nere as Roman Imperator on a very high pedestal with relief decorations in antique taste, by Michelangelo's opponent Bandinelli (1540). The narrow Piazza S. Trinità, frequently mentioned in the chronicles of the old town, hardly looks now like a closed-in Square; a clumsy, antique column with an inscription proclaims the glory of the first Grand Duke Cosimo. The inner town enclosed by the oldest circuit of walls has two splendid Squares: in the North the Cathedral Square with the Baptistry and the Loggia del Bigallo, and in the South the Piazza della Signoria (fig. 14), the most original probably of all Squares in any Italian town, quite contrary to all rules in its arrangement and yet harmonious in effect, as there is nothing disturbing in this combination of old and new. This refers at least to the architectural setting, for the colossal fountain by Ammanati (a meritorious architect, as Florence can prove) can only be regretted in this place, and the arrogant equestrian statue of Cosimo I. by Giambologna with its miserable socle-reliefs is a derision of the birthplace of the Renaissance.

The older generation still knows the former "centre" with the numerous old palaces of the nobles, the ghetto and the Mercato Vecchio. All this had

to be demolished for sanitary reasons (since 1888). The new buildings, the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele with its equestrian statue, the mighty triumphal gate and the adjoining broad streets, are no doubt hygienic; they are moreover solidly built and are even splendid in parts. The many modern restaurants may also be looked upon as improvements. But to judge from the not very lively traffic in this quarter, this new, fine town appears to have hurried ahead of the needs of its time. The erection of these splendid façades in such proximity to the Palazzo Strozzi proves an almost touching amount of self-confidence. Not even the shops with their contents do justice to these buildings, although in this respect the old thoroughfares and the very elegant Lungarno offer naught but disappointment to the visitor who has come to Florence with exalted notions of the historical fame of the ancient guilds and of handicrafts ennobled by art. To-day the local industry is confined to majolica, pietradura, felt-hats and straw-plaiting—the rest must be found in antiquity-shops. What has become of the noble art of the goldsmith? We barbarians of the North can show better things—not to speak of the rubbish exposed in the stalls of the Ponte Vecchio!



Fig. 13. Piazza S. Croce.



Fig. 14. Piazza della Signoria.

#### IV. THE FOURTEENTH (GOTHIC) CENTURY. THE THREE POETS. THE DUKE OF ATHENS. FACTION FIGHTS. ALBIZZI AND MEDICI.

THE Gothic century, with the triple constellation of its national literature, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, has so much character in its culture, and is so compact, harmonious and imposing, that one might choose between it and the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and still ask: which was the greater period—that of Dante and Giotto, or that of the budding Renaissance?

Dante (fig. 15) was Guelph by birth and education, but had become Ghibelline ever since Beatrice's death (1290). A year before, when he was 24, he had fought in the ranks of the Florentine Guelphs who defeated the Aretines at Campaldino. He composed the *Vita Nuova*, the song of songs in honour of Beatrice Portinari, whilst he was still in Florence, but everything else in exile, without which his "Divine Comedy" could not be imagined. How did all this happen?

Since 1297 Guelph Florence was divided in two parties, the one led by the fierce Corso Donati, the other by a distinguished merchant of the non-aristocratic Cerchi family. Both had fought at Campaldino, Corso with great distinction. As early as 1299 Corso ruled over the citizens, protected, as he was, by Boniface VIII. who strove to acquire by his help the mastery over Tuscany. Among the followers of the Cerchi were, besides the citizens, some nobles who were hostile to the Donati or had other private reasons. This party took up again, as it were, the cause of Giano della Bella and became Ghibelline in consequence. Dante and his friend the poet Guido Cavalcanti belonged to it. The few years before Dante's exile (1302) are full of dramatic incidents and highly important political events. The chroniclers think, that the feud might have been peacefully settled, had it not been rekindled by the neighbouring town of Pistoja whose nobles were also divided by a bloody family feud. One party, called the *Neri* (Black) were exiled and went to Florence to join their allies, the Donati; the others, the *Bianchi* (White), were Ghibellines and secured the help of the Cerchi. Thus these names were transferred to the Florentine parties, and whilst in Pistoja hundreds of *Neri* were executed by the *Bianchi* between 1301 and 1303, the civil strife in Florence increased in bitterness and keenness.

The Florentine *Bianchi* had arraigned a number of *Neri*, secret agents of the Pope who used these proceedings, which he believed to be directed against himself, as an excuse for interfering in Florentine affairs. On May-day, 1300, in the Piazza S. Trinità a bloody fight took place between the youths of both parties and was continued on other occasions. A funeral on the Piazza dei Frescobaldi led to a new tumult, and general civil war ensued soon after in consequence of an encounter, in which Dante's friend Guido Cavalcanti had crossed swords with the mighty Corso. To avoid Papal interference Corso and



Fig. 15. Dante, by Andrea del Castagno.  
S. Apollonia.

many other "Blacks" were exiled, as well as Guido and a few "Whites". The Cardinal of Acquasparta had been dispatched in May by Boniface as "peacemaker". He arrived, when Dante was one of the priors (June 15.—Aug. 15. 1300), but nothing decisive happened during these two months. The feud continued, and the Cardinal left the town in September under an interdict. In September 1301 the Pope, urged by the Blacks, sent a new mediator, Charles of Valois, who used his office to procure money by means of taxes and extortions, to defray his travelling expenses to Sicily, the throne of which had been awarded to him by a former Pope, Martin IV. He left Florence in March 1302, after disgraceful conduct, went to Sicily, but was defeated by Frederic of Aragon and returned to France. This second peacemaker had done indescribable harm to Florence. The unruly Corso had returned in November 1301 with an armed crowd who plundered and murdered for a fortnight. The Neri were now in power; the Bianchi left the town in crowds about Christmas 1301, and were followed by Dante, whose sentence is dated Jan. 27. 1302. His hated enemy Pope Boniface VIII. died soon after.

Dante was never to see his native town again, in spite of his ardent longing. Ten years later the arrival of Henry VII. filled him with new hope. But his Imperial hero, who had vainly besieged Florence for two months after his return from the Coronation in Rome (1312) died a sudden death—the last saviour that was to appear to the exiled Florentine Ghibellines.

The Guelphs of Florence now offered the sovereignty of their town to King Robert of Naples, who retained it for eight years, until 1321 (the year of Dante's death). The internal struggles continued with interruptions. But abroad Guelph Florence suffered a serious defeat at Montecatini (1315) from the Ghibelline Uguccione della Faggiuola, Lord of Pisa and Lucca. Further severe wars had to be carried on against an even more dangerous Ghibelline opponent: Castruccio Castracani, Lord of Lucca (since 1321), who attacked Prato in 1323 and took Pistoja in 1325. In their straits they petitioned King Robert in 1326 to give them his son Charles as "Signore". In the following year Louis of Bavaria came to Italy and conquered Pisa with Castruccio's help. Castruccio kept the town, when Louis proceeded to Rome, and made it a new base against Florence. Charles, whose greed had made him hated by the Florentines, hurried to Naples to defend this town against the Emperor, and died soon after, as did also Castruccio in the midst of his successes, at Lucca (1328). Thus, unexpectedly and undeservedly, the Florentines were delivered of two equally great dangers.

They soon forgot their misfortunes, and had learnt nothing from their faults. Whatever they had suffered under a foreign ruler, was far surpassed by their experiences in 1342—3. Again an unfortunate war with Pisa induced them to apply to King Robert for a "Signore". He sent them a French nobleman,

Gauthier de Brienne, who called himself *Duke of Athens*. They might have known him, for he had been there before, as Vicar of Prince Charles in 1326, but then he had kept within bounds; this time he showed no restraint. It is almost ludicrous to read, how this Prince without country, with his handful of armed men, dragged the citizens of Florence hither and thither, took advantage of their disputes and jealousies, ravaged with prison, axe and confiscation, and made them finally proclaim him Signore for life, until the duped Florentines discovered, that they were strong enough to turn him out. But this was effected by such comical, careful manoeuvres, that to the very last it appeared doubtful, which side would have to bear the cost.

All these tyrants and tormentors of the Florentine people were Guelphs; the Ghibellines in whom Dante placed his hopes were banished for good. Dante, whose fate has led to the narration of these events, was a statesman, and even as poet he was filled with political ideas. Let us now consider the political attitude of the other two great poets of the century. Petrarch's father, a "white" Guelph, had been banished together with Dante. Petrarch, born at Arezzo, lived at and near Avignon, then in Venice and Padua, always keeping up his connection with ruling Lords and statesmen. Only once he came to Florence, and then only temporarily (1350). Before he was crowned with the poet's laurel in Rome, he had long corresponded with King Robert and had met him personally at Naples (1341). Soon after he was full of enthusiasm for the fantastic Roman Tribune, Cola di Rienzi (1347). He took keen interest in the return of the Pope from Avignon to Rome and gave his services at the same time to the Visconti of Milan, monsters of the worst description and moreover Ghibellines—he who had been the favourite of Robert, the Guelph! As Dante had once called Henry VII. to Italy, so Petrarch sent letters to the German King Charles IV., met him personally when he came to Italy in 1354, and went to find him in Prague, in 1356, to gain his support for the Visconti. In Venice, and wherever else he stayed, he took interest in public affairs. All this finds expression in his poetry, and even more in his prose-writings.

His friend *Boccaccio*, his junior by ten years, must be taken entirely as man of letters: political party-questions did not concern him, and if he was sent on political missions by his fellow-citizens, this was only due to his complete command of Latin rhetoric. He no longer had to invite a German Emperor to Italy, and would not have done so either, since he was a confirmed Guelph. In this respect he forms a strong contrast to the honoured poet whose Comedy he explained to the Florentines in the quiet little church of S. Stefano, near the Via Por S. Maria (1373—75).

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After the expulsion of the Duke of Athens (1343) Florence had to employ many a foreign captain, buy many an alliance, and turn away foreign armies through payments instead of blows. No more foreign tyrants were allowed within her walls. Further internal struggles which extended well into the 15<sup>th</sup> century gradually prepared the Republic for the Medici rule. They were waged about civic government, and not caused by the division of Italy into two great parties.

Immediately after the expulsion of the Duke commenced the actions against the defeated party. The *Grandi*—as the Guelph nobles were called, after the extinction of the Ghibellines—were prosecuted in every direction and excluded from office. Even the antiquated party-names came into use once more (1354). An influential old Guelph family, the *Albizzi*, were inculpated as “Ghibellines” by their opponents, the Ricci, a family of *popolani*. To render them harmless, the *ordinamenti della giustizia* of 1268 were again put in force against all who were suspected of Ghibelline tendencies: the *capitani* of the *Parte Guelfa* were to conduct the investigations and to purge the town. But the Albizzi were wiser than their opponents. Instead of resisting, they advocated the unreasonable measure, turning its keen edge eventually against their enemies. From 1357 the *ammonizioni* (warnings) were put in force against anybody who proved obnoxious. Their use involved disfranchisement. The antiquated machinery worked, through it proved clumsy and two-edged. To many it appeared ludicrous, like a storm in a tea-cup, that the Ricci and Albizzi had the presumption to emulate the great struggles between the Uberti and Buondelmonti, the Donati and Cerchi. Over 200 citizens were “admonished” between 1357 and 1366. The captains of the *Parte Guelfa* had become the most powerful authority and the tools of the Albizzi who had on their side the old aristocracy and the greater part of the respected Popolani families, and formed a strong, compact party, called Guelphs or *Grandi*. On the other side were the lower and a part of the higher Popolani, all the Ricci, Tommaso Strozzi—Carlo belonged to the *Grandi*—the old and formerly Imperialist Ghibelline family of the Alberti who had owned Semifonte and moved to Florence after the destruction of their stronghold, and finally most of the Medici. This capable family, not nobles, but patricians of the town, come now to the front to conduct the final and victorious fight against the Albizzi, whilst the Ricci succumbed definitely and the Alberti temporarily.

The *Medici*, who subsequently belonged to the influential guild of the Calimala, distinguished themselves at an early time by their popular attitude. The records of the town mention their names from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. A Giovanni had been executed in 1342, under the Duke of Athens. The first Medici of political importance is Salvestro, who was made *gonfaloniere*

*della giustizia* for May and Juni 1378. Piero degli Albizzi knew what this signified, and had vainly endeavoured to prevent it. But he did not have to give up as lost the cause of his party; the term of office was short, and Salvestro did not succeed in his intention of renewing the *ordini della giustizia* against the grandi, of reducing the power of the *Parte Guelfa* and reinstating the victims of the *ammonizioni*.

In the same year (1378) occurred an event, the like of which Florence had never witnessed before: a revolt of the mob, the *ciompi*, which led to a temporary rule of the mob, and is known as the "tumult of the wool-carders", because the principal contingent of the discontented was supplied by the workmen of the *Arte della Lana*. The gains and subsequent losses of the mob need not be recounted, since they were of no lasting importance, though two points must be mentioned: first of all, this was the first time that the mob took up politics, which implied not only a future strengthening of the guilds against the nobles, but also of the lesser against the greater guilds. Secondly, the two great parties, the Albizzi and their less consolidated opponents, had to take sides in the fight of the mob. It is true, the immediate result was not what might have been expected. The wool-carders had confided in Salvestro and his friends, who had repeatedly espoused their cause. On the other hand they considered the Guelphs and the Albizzi their enemies who commenced with a sharp reaction after the suppression of the revolt. The scales went up and down for three years. Piero Albizzi was executed in 1379, but soon after Giorgio Scali, one of the chiefs of the other party, was decapitated, and Tommaso Strozzi had to fly. The Albizzi had won. The constitution was regulated to suit them, the mob and lesser guilds deprived of all their gains, and the power placed in the hands of the *Optimati* after the recall of all who had been exiled since Salvestro's term as gonfaloniere. A great number of those who had incurred the displeasure of the Albizzi were removed. Benedetto Alberti had to go first and the other members of his family were admonished (1387). When Maso Albizzi, Piero's nephew, became gonfaloniere, nearly all the Alberti and a number of other citizens were exiled. Veri Medici, the head of his family after Salvestro's death, might have made himself Lord of the town with the help of the discontented, but he preferred peace, and reestablished order by his personal influence, without holding any office. Since the exiles did not rest and their partisans within the gates were able to help them, a certain number of the nobles opposed to the Albizzi were declared rebels about the end of the century, all the Ricci, Medici and Alberti admonished for ten years, and the latter finally banished on reaching the age of fifteen. That was in 1400. Thus the rule of the Albizzi in Florence lasted from 1381 to 1434, when Cosimo returned from exile. According to Guicciardini they were in full

power from 1393, when Maso was gonfaloniere, until 1421, when Giovanni Medici held this office, and the two centuries which are sharply divided in art by the awakening of the Renaissance, show no mark of separation in political life.

Before turning to the century of the early Renaissance, let us recount the most important achievements of the Gothic century. The great churches and secular buildings already referred to, S. Maria Novella, S. Croce, the Duomo and Campanile, the palace of the priors, and the Bargello were continued and partly completed. The frescoes of S. Croce, commenced by Giotto in the Bardi and Peruzzi chapels, were worked on during the whole century by his successors; the Orcagnas decorated the Strozzi chapel in S. Maria Novella with their frescoes. The first bronze gate of the Baptistry was completed by Andrea Pisano in 1336. Now they were building Or San Michele, the Loggia del Bigallo (since 1352), and the Loggia de' Lanzi (since 1376). Boccaccio died the year before. A university was founded in 1320. The wool and silk industries were flourishing, the one with 200, the other with over 80 workshops (about 1340). The agencies and offices of the Florentines extended to Bruges and London. The Bardi and Perruzzi were made bankrupt (1346) by an enormous loan to Eduard III. of England. A plague devastated the town (1348) during the faction fights after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens. Nothing could stop the active force of the Florentines; their vitality seemed indestructible.



Fig. 16. Piazza S. Lorenzo.



Fig. 17. S. Maria Novella, View towards the Choir.

## V. THE GOTHIC CHURCHES.

S. MARIA NOVELLA. S. CROCE. DUOMO AND CAMPANILE.  
S. TRINITÀ.

THE Gothic of the Italian churches, which is essentially different from that of the North, is not derived from Northern France, but from Burgundy, whence it had been brought to Central Italy, but not to Florence, before 1200 by Cistercian monks. Fifty years later the newly founded orders of mendicant friars adopted the foreign architectural style—the Dominicans, and the Franciscans, to whose efforts it is chiefly due, that the Gothic style took root in Italy. Yet it could never shake off its foreign character, and it has

contributed less to the picture of the Italian towns, than the more varied secular architecture with its city-gates, halls and palaces, which obviously appealed more strongly to the Italians.

The aims of the Italian artistic spirit differ, where monastic and episcopal churches are concerned, from those of the North. They make for spacious rooms, light, broad masses, and an effective general view. The interior is created, as it were, for frescoes and sculptures, but lacks the architectural music which results from the wealth of ornament. With the loss of the upward, vertical tendency vanishes the interest in the systematic division of the diagonally ribbed vault; the articulated, clustered column becomes meaningless and is replaced by a more simple and massive, octagonal or square pillar. The walls are larger and emptier, the windows smaller and not enriched by tracery. All that really remains of the Gothic style, is the pointed arch, and it was quite natural, that the Romanesque round arch was gradually fallen back upon—a step towards the Renaissance. More sober even, and sometimes almost mean, is the treatment of the outside. There are no towers over the front, as in the churches of the North. Instead of this a detached clock-tower is placed beside the church. Many churches were left without artistically finished façades: time and money were lacking, and interest had been exhausted by the interior.

The Dominican church of S. Maria Novella, the earliest of the three chief churches of Florence, was commenced in 1278 by two friars, but only finished after 1350; notwithstanding its moderate size (325 ft. in length), its harmonious, vaulted roof is quite Gothic in character (fig. 17). Twelve pillars, far apart and articulated by four projecting pilasters, separate the nave from the narrow aisles. To the older part, commenced with the choir, belong the transept and the two first East bays of the nave, which were given an oblong shape by their pillars being placed closer together. Afterwards the arcades were widened towards the west. Evidently the desire for spaciousness was now growing, perhaps under the impression of the progressing Duomo. Unintentionally a curious effect of perspective resulted from the meeting of the different periods of the building. If you enter from the West, the nave appears longer than it actually is, owing to the decreasing distances of the pillars towards the choir. The choir is not polygonal, but terminates in square chapels. The windows are large, the walls comparatively slight, the general effect of the interior not grand, but so homely and—without the wealth of Gothic ornament, which has never been to the taste of the Italians—so trim and festive, that Michelangelo used to call S. Maria Novella his bride. The exterior is simple, but architecturally articulated by slightly projecting counter-pillars and round-arched friezes above them. The tower is Romanesque and is situated *behind* the building,

on the left. Alberti's Renaissance façade will be referred to later. To the right the large cloisters join the church; to the left a Gothic arcade of white and black marble, within which are numerous tombs. All this is intelligently restored and kept in good condition, so that this largest of all Florentine church Squares is most imposing and impressive (fig. 12).

In the West of the town, at the narrow end of a Square, is another marble façade which the Englishman Sloane, the whilom owner of the Medicean Villa Careggi, had erected for 500,000 lire (fig. 13). Through one of its three gates we enter the Franciscan church of S. Croce, a mighty building, almost in every respect a pendant to S. Maria Novella (fig. 18). At first the effect of the interior is almost that of a single room, the wide arcades exposing the aisles completely from the nave. There are seven pairs of arcades, only one more than in S. Maria Novella, though S. Croce is 56 ft. longer. The nave, about 115 ft. high, is not vaulted, but covered by a very conspicuous rafted ceiling. Whilst some agree with Ruskin in praising the unpretentiousness of this pious age, others are vexed at finding no Gothic vaults over the pointed arcades. As though anybody in Tuscany could at that time have thought of vaulting a span of nearly 60 ft., the widest nave in existence! The rafted ceiling was a necessity, whilst the narrower aisles could be, and had to be vaulted for the greater security of the building. The pillars are octagonal, as in the Duomo, but more simple. The choir-end is not beautiful, less pleasing than in S. Maria Novella, and less clear in arrangement. The chapels contain many works of great beauty, particularly the frescoes of Giotto and his school, but they do not affect the general impression which depends entirely on the proportions of the nave and on its effect of colour. Along the walls, between Vasari's insipid baroque altars, are tombs of many periods. The church is filled with statues, reliefs and pictures, like a museum, and yet the impression is dominated by the sober simplicity of this immense interior.

The Franciscan church was commenced in 1294 by Arnolfo di Cambio and continued from his designs. The choir was completed after his death, in 1320, but the church was only consecrated in 1442. To the right are the cloisters, likewise planned by Arnolfo; behind the church, facing the entrance, an early Renaissance work, Brunelleschi's Pazzi chapel. From here can be seen the tower (most of it recent work) which stands to the right behind the church, and the modest side wall. To the left, in the Via de' Malcontenti, are again, as at S. Maria Novella, arcades with tombs.

In the year when the foundation-stone of S. Croce was laid, the Florentines decided to build a new, larger Duomo in the place of the old Cathedral. It was later given the proud name of *S. Maria del Fiore* (fig. 19). As the old church was still on the site, Arnolfo commenced the new building in 1296

from the West, but did not carry it beyond the two first bays till 1301, the year of his death. His successors Giotto and Andrea Pisano worked on the Campanile, but did not advance the Duomo, which was taken up again in 1357 by Francesco Talenti. But now ambition had grown. This Cathedral was to be unequalled, and this explains the many contradictory turns in the history of the building. Commissions of architects and painters were appointed



Fig. 18. S. Croce, View towards the Choir.

and all Florentines were called upon to judge. Ten years later the nave with its four bays was completed, the East-side not before 1421, and at last in 1434 Brunelleschi had completed the cupola over the octagonal tambour up to the lantern which was finished from his model long after his death in 1446.

Arnolfo had placed his arcades closer together, as is shown by the still preserved outer counter-pillars of the West bays. Talenti pulled down the old pillars and placed his own so far apart, that the effect of the division into nave and aisles is quite lost. In doing so he sacrificed the vertical tendency. One does

not feel that the nave measures over 135 ft. from floor to vault. And if the flat vault does not attract one's eyes upwards, Talenti had nevertheless solved the hitherto unattempted problem of vaulting a span of nearly 56 ft.

From the choir the high cupola appears far too mighty for the long nave which leads one to expect the customary transept, instead of which the octa-



Fig. 19. Cathedral, View towards the Choir.

gonal choir under the cupola is surrounded on three sides by polygonal tribunes, each with five chapels. The fourth side opens towards the nave. It is an artistic contradiction which can only be explained, but not removed, by historical consideration.

A cupola had formed part of Arnolfo's scheme, but we do not know how he imagined it to be carried out. When Talenti's nave was finished, the Commission decided upon the rest of the ground-plan, and when Brunelleschi

at a later date (1420) undertook the erection of the cupola, he had to base it on the octagonal tambour with its light round windows. He had carefully studied the cupola of the Roman Pantheon, which is supported all round by a circular foundation, but here the task was very different. He was tied by the tambour to the shape of a cupola rising from eight sides. Moreover it had to be steeper and more pointed than say that of the Baptistry, because it was to tower over the mighty aisle, visible at a great distance, the landmark of a large town. It would be unfair to try and find in its silhouette the harmony of line of the cupola of St. Peter's. Constructively it is, with its double shell, a masterpiece of its time. On the other hand the spirit of the Renaissance is hardly to be felt, except perhaps in the striving after something grand and extraordinary. Brunelleschi has become the great builder of the Renaissance, not through this cupola, but in spite of it.

As regards artistic effect, an important effort that has its bearing on the development of architecture, ends in an unsatisfactory result, because the single parts are not in harmony. Just as the effect of the cupola does not come up to its dimensions, we do not become conscious of the extraordinary length of the church. Very different is the impression produced by the outside of the building from the Square (fig. 1). You feel at once, that you are looking at a mighty edifice, and you are pleased to note, that the outside has been completed, which is not often the case with the big churches of Italy. Best of all is the pattern of the oldest parts on the first West bay, which dates back to Talenti. Seen from the back the building appears petty with its many parts, its low chapels, the buttresses of the tribunes and the small Renaissance annexes by Brunelleschi over the buttresses of the tambour. Of the modern façade we need only state, that it is not as bare as that of S. Croce, and that, if it was wanted at all, it probably could not have been improved upon by modern works. It follows the Campanile as closely as possible.

The "Shepherd's Tower", as Ruskin calls it, consists of five stories, including the ground-floor, but the shepherd Giotto, master-builder of the Cathedral from 1334 to 36, is only responsible for the lowest section; the rest was not even erected after his plan. The second section and the double-storey above with two rows of four niches each, a narrow window on each side and projecting pilasters between, were added by Andrea Pisano. The three upper, windowed stories and the gallery supported by buttresses, are by Talenti who proved himself to be an intelligent and truly Italian Gothic builder. The openings for the windows are widened as the tower rises; the weight seems to decrease, the plastic articulation is clear, the flat decoration fine and varied. The crowning top intended by Giotto was never added. The 26 reliefs on the lower socle by Giotto, Andrea Pisano and Luca della Robbia, which will be referred to

later, present an encyclopaedia of human activities, science and art since the creation of the world. The upper row, with 7 reliefs on each side, has not much meaning and is no longer connected with Giotto's spirit. The statues in the niches by Donatello and others are too high and seem lost in their positions.

To get the most impressive view of this most beautiful of all Gothic belfries, one has to see it from the South side of the Duomo, whence the sight of the modern façade does not spoil the effect, and Duomo, Campanile and part of the Baptistery are combined in one picture—especially late in the afternoon, when dusk is settling on the Square and the parting sun gilds the upper stories of the tower and the roof and cupola of the Cathedral.

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Of the smaller Gothic churches we shall only consider one, the interesting and somewhat complicated plan of which becomes only now intelligible, although it is older than those principal churches. *S. Trinità*, situated in the Square of the same name, has been given a late baroque façade (by Buontalenti, 1593), which is in no way in keeping with the effect of the interior. Originally founded by the Vallombroso monks (1077), it had a nave and two aisles, with a crypt supported by columns, above which was the raised choir, just as in *S. Miniato*. In the Gothic period, about 1250, it was rebuilt, probably by Arnolfo, after the plan of the Cistercian churches. Five square chapels extend along the choir wall; the transept has three, the nave five, vaulted bays; the arcades rest on square pillars. The body of the church, however, has a nave and four aisles; the aisles of the extreme outside were subsequently arranged as chapels. In its renovated condition (since 1880) this interior presents so bright and solemn a picture, that we are loth to depart from it hurriedly. Anticipating the course of history, we glean a few impressions from the artistic decoration with which the early Renaissance greets us in this place, because in this very building they speak to us with so much emphasis.

How much money, care, and artistic thought Francesco de' Sassetti devoted to his family chapel with the pictorial decoration by Ghirlandajo and the mural tombs by Giuliano da Sangallo, splendid, yet modestly satisfied with a nobly designed black marble sarcophagus! Next to it, in the present sacristy, Palla Strozzi, the great adversary of the Medici, buried his father Onofrio (1417), and had a simple tomb made by one of Donatello's successors: a sarcophagus with an escutcheon and an inscription in a niche. A Davanzati is resting in an ancient Christian sarcophagus, to which only a lid with a recumbent figure of the defunct has been added (1444). Fully aware of their own power, the men of this period modestly preferred a genuine work of the olden times, and in their minds the antique presented the highest style. The inscription had always to be in latin.

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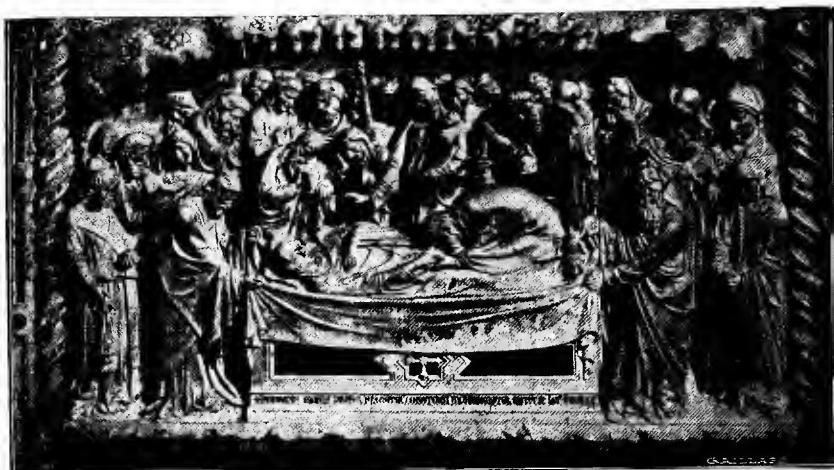


Fig. 20. Death of the Virgin. From the back of the Tabernacle.

## VI. OR SAN MICHELE.

### ORCAGNA'S TABERNACLE. THE STATUES OF THE GUILDS.

THE garden with the holy shrine of St. Michael in the Via Calzajoli has a long history which takes us back to the early days of Florenze. Since the time of the Longobards the archangel had rivalled in popularity the patron saint of the town, St. John the Baptist; at least four churches and two convents were consecrated to him. As far back as the 9<sup>th</sup> century we find a small, old convent "in the garden", for the nuns of St. Michael, and after 1176 a church which was demolished in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In 1284 the municipality had a "corn exchange" built after Arnolfo's plan, and placed it under the supervision of the Guild of Silk Manufacturers. On one of the pillars was a miraculous image of the Virgin, which led to the foundation of a Brotherhood of the Holy Virgin, in 1291. The new cult took such hold on the populace, that the churches were neglected and the mendicant friars who had been settled in Florence for fifty years found their authority endangered. In 1304 a conflagration, caused by a recreant prelate, destroyed 1700 houses and amongst them the hall in Orto di San Michele. For a long time temporary buildings had to serve as makeshift, until in 1336 the foundations were laid for the three-storied building, whose narrow sides form the front and back, and whose palace-like construction in no way suggests a church (fig. 21).

The plan was probably designed by Talenti, who most likely built the ground-floor, originally an open arched hall, resting on octagonal pillars. The

masters afterwards in charge of the building were the painter-sculptor Orcagna (d. 1368) and Benci di Cione of Como, not Orcagna's brother, who finished the last storey in the eighties; the cornice was not added before 1404. During this extended period of deliberations and orders of the municipal authorities, the strange decision was arrived at to change the original purpose of the building and to transform the lower storey into a church which was, however, not consecrated to the former patron, but to the Virgin Mary. The proceedings were lively, according to the records. The service before the miraculous image had never ceased, and in 1348 Orcagna received the commission for a precious tabernacle which he finished in 1359. The brotherhood of Mary would have preferred to do away altogether with St. Michael, and only his memory was preserved in the name of Or San Michele. To the worship of Mary was added that of her mother Anna, on the day of whose festival in 1343 the Florentines had succeeded in expelling the Duke of Athens. After she had protected to the Florentines in the year of the Plague 1348, the town decided in 1349 to erect a chapel in her honour in the garden of St. Michael. Since the keeping of a corn-magazine in so sacred a place was subsequently found to be improper, its removal to another district was ordered in 1357, and what had hitherto been an oratory, is for the first time expressly mentioned as a church in 1360.

The hall on the groundfloor was not very suitable for a church,

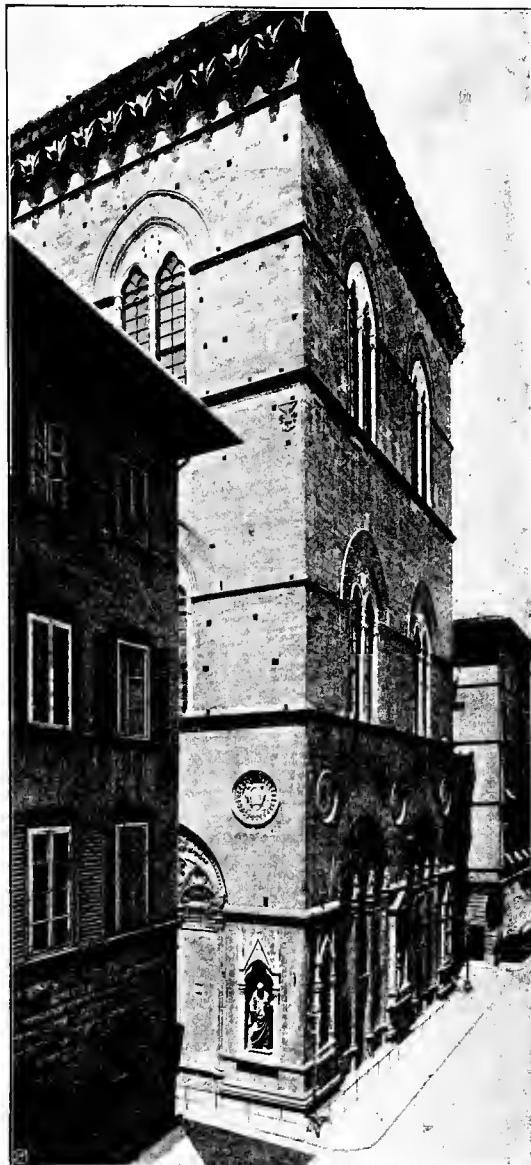


Fig. 21. Or San Michele, from the Via Calzajoli.

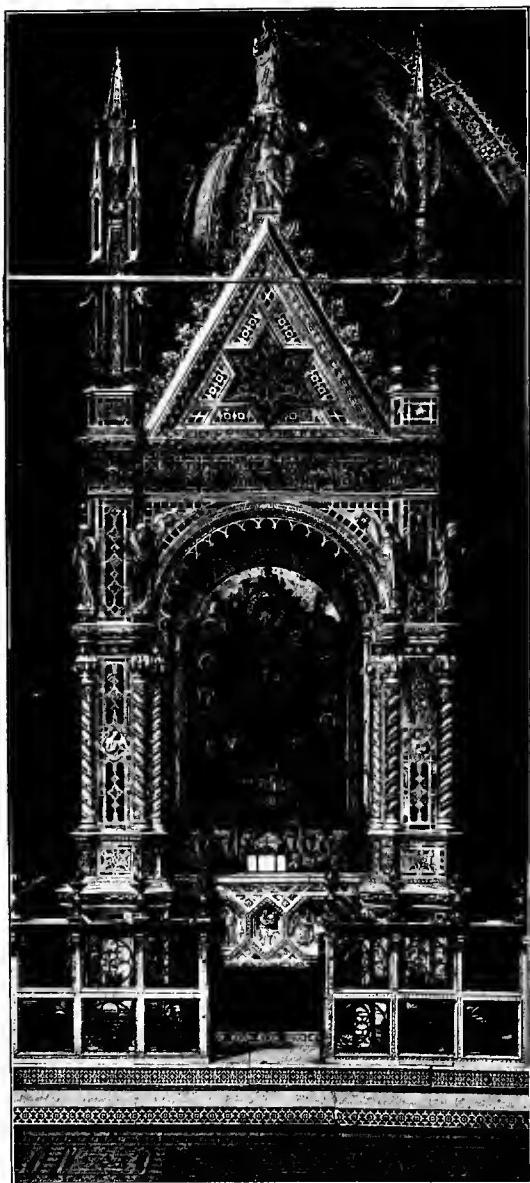


Fig. 22. Orcagna's Tabernacle. Or San Michele.

repose belong to the best produced in this period. The series concludes with the rare representation of the aged Mother of Christ receiving the message of death from an angel with a palm-branch. In front the whole space under the arch is occupied by the altarpiece of the Madonna surrounded by angels whose arrangement is repeated in the little figures on the sculptured frame (fig. 22).

since it had been planned with two naves and three bays on each side, and had therefore no central nave. This could not be changed, but the openings between the pillars could be walled up and some decorative additions made to the interior, to give it a more church-like appearance. This task was undertaken by Talenti's son Simone. He added two porches to the back, which was now made the front, and windows with three divisions and rich tracery to the other sides. All this was subsequently spoilt and disfigured by bad walling-up, with little windows let into the stonework. The interior is so dark, that one can only just feel the pleasing proportions of the vault. In the left nave is the chief altar, in the right, against the east wall stands Orcagna's tabernacle, on the back of which some little light falls through the near window. Here we see on the lower part a spirited relief of the Death of the Virgin (fig. 20), and above it, under the arch, Mary in a mandorla handing her girdle to St. Thomas. Just above the socle are on each side two small octagonal panels with scenes from the life of the Virgin, which in their simple, serious

It is a genuine, precious monument of Italian Gothic with a profusion of ornamental details, exquisite work in marble and coloured mosaic inlay, surrounded by a gate with bronze tracery. Whether the picture, too, is by Orcagna who received payment for a painting in 1352 (Schmarsow) or by some other Giottesque, cannot be decided in the obscurity, in which the picture is veiled. To judge from the records to hand, it is more probable that Orcagna had to build his tabernacle round an already existing picture. At what date this picture replaced the earlier Madonna, which probably perished in the fire of 1304, can no longer be traced.

Subsequently the guilds presented to Or San Michele the important *sculptures on the exterior*. The pilasters have 14 high niches which were soon filled with statues, one of them as early as 1340 by the Silk Manufacturers. An edict of 1406 commanded the placing of all the Saints within the next ten years. Eleven niches are still occupied by the statues originally made for them; one, which is now empty, has an inscription of 1399 and formerly harboured the Madonna della Rosa now in the interior of the church; two with the St. Luke by Giambologna and the Evangelist St. John had older statues, believed to be Nos 3 and 5 in the court of the Bargello. The seven greater and seven of the minor guilds participated in the new decoration. All the statues are of marble, except Ghiberti's three bronze figures. The niches differ in size and architectural adornment and are partly decorated with interesting reliefs. In going round the building one can enjoy the spectacle of early Renaissance sculpture shaking off Gothic fetters. To these impressions we shall refer later, and must finish for the present with a chronological list of the artists and works not mentioned yet.

Nanni di Banco (d. 1420) is responsible for the Eligius, a group of four Saints, and the St. Phillip; a Gothic artist of Ghiberti's school, probably Ciuffagni (1385—1456) for St. James\*; Donatello for the St. George (1416) with the relief of the fight with the dragon by Nanni di Banco, for the St. Mark (ordered in 1411) and probably the St. Peter; Ghiberti for the Baptist (1414—16), St. Matthew (1419—22) and St. Stephen (1425—26); and finally Verrocchio for the Christ and St. Thomas, ordered about 1463, completed in 1483, and unveiled in 1486. The niche is by Donatello and Michelozzo and was, as we now know, finished as early as 1425.

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\* All these have reliefs on the socle and pediment.

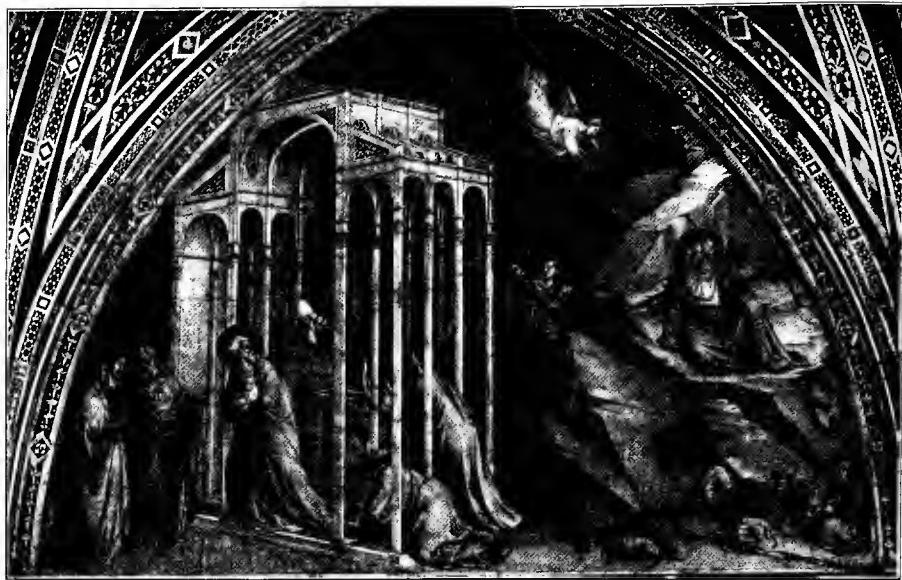


Fig. 23. Joachim's Flight to the Desert, by Taddeo Gaddi. S. Croce.

## VII. PAINTING AND SCULPTURE OF THE GOTHIC PERIOD.

RELATIONS OF SCULPTURE AND PAINTING. CIMABUE. GIOTTO AND HIS SCHOOL (S. CROCE). ANDREA PISANO (BAPTISTERY GATE). CAMPANILE (GIOTTO, ANDREA PISANO, AND LUCA DELLA ROBBIA). ORCAGNA. FRESCOES OF THE SPANISH CHAPEL. SPINELLO ARETINO IN S. MINIATO. SCULPTURES ON THE DUOMO AND AT OR SAN MICHELE.

ALL of us who come to Florence from the North must notice the poverty of this town of great Gothic buildings in plastic works of the same period. This would probably be different, if Giovanni Pisano, Niccolò's son, had lived here. The Pisan sculptors worked in Pistoja and Lucca and Siena, in Bologna and even in Padua, but they passed Florence. Arnolfo, the Cathedral architect, was also a sculptor, a distinguished pupil of Niccolò, whose son Giovanni was his junior. We know his grandly conceived tomb at Orvieto and some other sculptures in Rome—but nothing of the sort in Florence, where there was evidently not much demand for plastic art. Florence had her goldsmiths and stone-cutters; for the churches the traditional flat marble decoration was considered sufficient, and the tombs of that period were small and modest. A

change set in with the Renaissance, when plastic art came to the fore with figures in the round, and showed the way to painting: Ghiberti and Donatello proceed Masaccio.

Niccolò's relief-sculpture with its leaning towards the antique was incapable of development beyond his own achievement. Its imitation could only lead to degeneration. His son Giovanni has far more independence and a power of characterisation which is capable of exaggeration and does not shrink from rendering the ugly; but he lacks restraint and architectural feeling; he is a brilliant raconteur in stone, but does not trouble about order, or clearness of expression, or formalism. Fate was kind to Italy in making Giotto appear at this moment. His fresco painting is the act of a genius who suddenly by one mighty effort carries the art of his country far ahead of that of the North.

Giovanni Pisano's sculpture and Giotto's painting are called *Gothic*. Giovanni was Gothic first of all as architect, f. i. of the Camposanto in Pisa; and the greater animation of his figures, as compared with his father's more quiet method of expression, is held to be a result of the suggestions of the new architectural style. In his upright figures in relief or in the round, the projection of the profiles and the wave-like flow of line in a downward direction recall the marble statues of the Gothic churches of France, which, in the lines of their silhouettes and draperies, are meant to form a contrast to the straight lines of their architectural setting. It is supposed that Giovanni was influenced by the monuments of this Northern art, or by immigrant artists. But this kind of "Gothic" alone does not explain either him, or Giotto. Where the latter introduces architecture or other accessories in his pictures, they show Gothic characteristics which also appear in the ornament and in the framing of his pictures, but the essence of his painting is no longer dependent on the forms of this style. Decisive for both artists is their personal power, their own strong, individual life. In the case of Giovanni the stirring inner life of his figures, the animated action and the pictorial arrangement of his relief-scenes, are rather opposed to the character of that Northern sculpture. These characteristics which are peculiar to all art since Giotto, are in accordance with the tendency of the period, and have also found expression in the literature of the young Italian vulgar tongue, with Dante, for instance, in picturesque, forceful descriptions and similes.

That Giovanni's heritage fell to the painter *Giotto*, and not to a sculptor, seems to be based on inner necessity. Giovanni's pictorial disposition (and the superabundance of his crowded, though loosely connected figures) would in its continuation by imitators have brought confusion into plastic art. But the painter Giotto found in it a basis for further development. Above all he saw the dramatic power, the expression of emotion, which had been unknown to

pictorial art. He wisely avoided Giovanni's overcrowding. His figures are placed separately or sparsely grouped; they are not generally in close proximity, so that their outlines overlap but rarely. In his work we do not yet find the crowded groups of spectators, which appear on 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes. He makes the best of space and atmosphere, which are lacking in Giovanni; the objects sparsely introduced into his landscape begin to show a certain feeling of nature: a few buildings stand for a town, trees for a forest, and isolated stones or rocks for mountain scenery. The plane at his disposal now serves to guide the ideas of the spectator, not yet pictorially by means of perspective arrangement, but by all manner of suggestions which are to replace it in his imagination: the figures approach us or stand back, and we see them in separate enclosed spaces; his men live and act as they do with Giovanni; something happens, and not only their movements, but even their faces take part in the action. The profiles are sharp and by no means invariably beautiful. Facial expression is more pleasing with Cimabue and his contemporary Duccio of Siena. With Giotto dramatic life rules supreme. His chief concern is not the single figure and its expression, but the connection by which several of them are linked to form a story. Individual characteristics receive but little attention. What his contemporaries admiringly accepted as the full truth of life, was frequently mere suggestion of it, like a language in a state of evolution, searching tentatively for expressions. It is convincing, for everything is fresh, young and natural, and with all its imperfections appears as a great achievement to an open mind, unaccustomed yet to this pictorial language. His colour no more attempts to deceive us by the appearance of full reality, than his line and his composition. Giotto's painting is not determined by the step towards Nature in detail—by what we now call realism, but by his grasp of the meaning, the accentuation of whatever is characteristic of the story. In all that appertains to his time, in portraiture and costume, he goes a little further than the sculptor Giovanni who, owing to the greater idealism of his art, could not quite free himself from the type of antique examples. On the whole the costume is still that of antiquity, but the women are already frequently dressed in Italian fashion. For this reason his figures appear to us less generalised, more as real Italians, and Giotto more realistic than Giovanni.

What Giotto learnt from him, he could not have learnt from any painter of his time, not even from his famous predecessor with whom he was certainly acquainted. Giotto di Bondone was probably born in 1266. The peasant-boy had come from his village to Florence, where Benvenuto di Pepo, called *Cimabue* (Bull's head), painted serious, stiff, devotional pictures, Madonnas in glory on panels with gold backgrounds. Even to this day their solemn splendour produces an awe-inspiring effect. Giotto's pupils spoke of them later as "painted

in the Greek manner", because they appeared to them too much like the Byzantine mosaics and pictures, after the creation by their own master of a style which was proudly called "Italian". Florence has only kept two of these pictures: the one from S. Trinità (now at the Academy) represents the Virgin enthroned and surrounded by eight angels, above a predella with four half figures of prophets; the other, far more important, the Rucellai Madonna which is still in its old place in the Rucellai chapel in S. Maria Novella. Here the Virgin is accompanied by six angels in close proximity (fig. 24). The picture is now more or less plausibly attributed to Duccio, which would dispose of the pretty story related by Vasari, or rather transfer it to Sienese soil. As a matter of fact the Borgo Allegri has its name not from the jubilation caused by this picture, but from the Allegri family. Everything else told after 300 years by Vasari of Giotto, Cimabue's pupil, is sheer romance. All we know of their relations is confined to a famous passage in Dante (*Purgatorio XI, 95*): "*Credette Cimabue nella pinta tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido*". Thus even at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century he had, with his new Italian style, entirely supplanted the former favourite, and to this very time belong the frescoes of Giotto, which still exist in Florence.

Giotto was a friend of Dante's and has sometimes expressed himself in Dantesque allegory, f. i. in Assisi. But in Florence he shows the simple narrative style which suits him best. Two family chapels in S. Croce contain two small cycles of pictures of identical disposition. In the Bardi Chapel we see the life of St. Francis in three scenes, one above the other, on each of the two side-walls; in the Peruzzi Chapel, on the left three scenes from the story of the Baptist, on the right the same number from that of St. John the Evangelist. They were painted long after Giotto's return from Padua, not before 1317. The plentiful architecture in the St. Francis pictures clearly suggests the different planes. The finest of these works represents the death of the Saint, quietly and solemnly, with subdued grief. The Peruzzi pictures contain more figures with more varied movement. The Feast of Herod is particularly noteworthy for its clear and terse narration (fig. 25). To the left of the table stands a



Fig. 24. Rucellai Madonna, by Cimabue.  
S. Maria Novella.

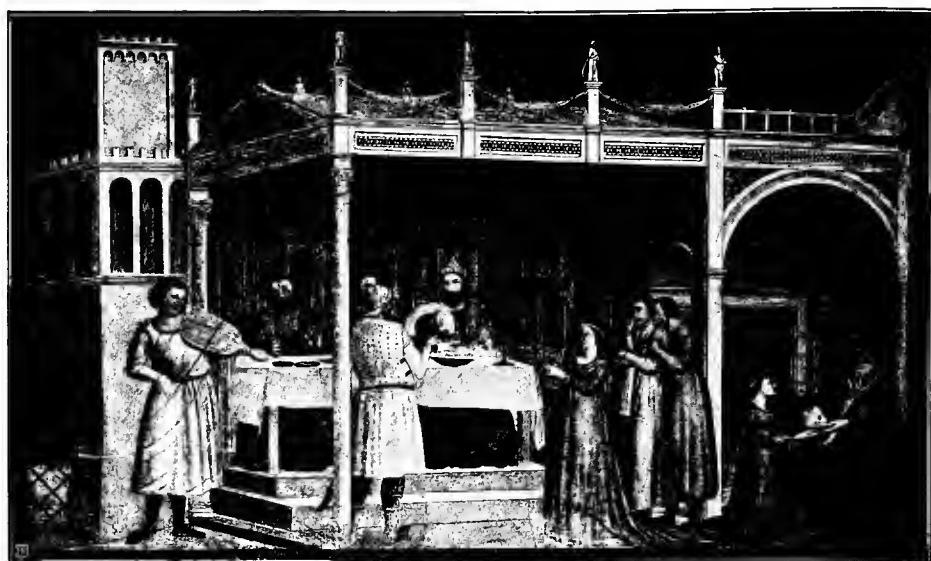


Fig. 25. The Feast of Herod, by Giotto. S. Croce.

graceful violin player; to the right Salome, not dancing, but in repose and modestly holding a harp in both hands. Behind her two female attendants watch the scene in rapt attention.

The colour, which is unfortunately steadily deteriorating, can now only give an imperfect idea of its original effect, in these works as well as in the other pictures in this unique storehouse of Giottesque frescoes. Giotto's most prominent follower, *Taddeo Gaddi* (d. 1366), shows his chief work on the left wall of the Baroncelli Chapel—five scenes from the life of the Virgin, in two pairs one above the other and crowned by a lunette, all in fairly good preservation (fig. 23). He is considerably inferior to his master; the movement is stiff and the figures stand less firmly. Taddeo's son *Agnolo* (d. 1396) is softer, sometimes graceful, though often merely mawkish—a further step towards the conventional: two walls of the Castellani Chapel with stories of the two Saints John and of SS. Nicholas and Anthony. More life and vigour is in his frescoes in the choir, representing the finding of the Holy Cross, but the clearness of the composition suffers from overcrowding.

We need not continue our search among the half ruined Giottesque remains in this church. All that can be said is, that they might have been worse, and that we are able to follow, through a veil as it were, the footsteps of a great art which continues to live for over a century. Again and again the Giottesques recommence their narratives, and though they decline in freshness, they still, as we shall see, introduce new features. Even in their easel pictures they favour

the narrative style, and are less happy in the quiet representation of Madonnas and Saints. Giotto himself is no exception. His *Madonna and Angels* (Academy, No. 103) has no justification after Cimabue's. The painters of Siena knew how to invest quiet existence with more soul and fervour.

Giotto, the successor of a sculptor, had again a sculptor as pupil: *Andrea Pisano* who with his assistance raised Florentine sculpture from the meagre beginnings, in which we have found it, and of which one instance will suffice. The pulpit of the demolished church of S. Pietro Scheraggio (now in S. Lionardo across the Arno), shows six reliefs of the life of Christ, childlike and clumsy, a little in the style of some Romanesque ivory-carving. Owing to the scarcity of early monuments it has been given a place in the history of sculpture, about 1250, only a little earlier than Niccolò's pulpit in the Pisa Baptistry! After this follows a long, barren period, at least in Florence. When,



Fig. 26.

Baptistry. Portion of Andrea Pisano's Door.



Fig. 27.

Baptistry. Portion of Ghiberti's first Door.



Fig. 28. Adam and Eve at Work,  
by Giotto. Campanile.



Fig. 29. Jabal, by Giotto.  
Campanile.

after 1321, a tomb was wanted for the warlike Bishop d'Orso who had helped in defending the town against Henry VII., the Sienese Tino di Camaino, a pupil of Giovanni Pisano, was approached. He made use of the form customary among his circle: a sarcophagus with reliefs in antique style, resting on brackets and crowned by the seated figure of the defunct (in the first aisle of the Duomo).

Andrea was not a Pisan: he only adopted this honoured name. He came from Pontedera in Tuscany, worked under Giovanni Pisano, and appears to us a Florentine in his art already, when he was commissioned by the Calimala to supply a *bronze gate* for the Baptistery (the present South gate; fig. 26). When he had finished the wax models (1330), he had attained the age of fifty-seven. In the construction of the door he shows his architectural training: each of the two wings is divided into two rows of seven compartments, and a Gothic frame enclosing a relief is fitted into each compartment. The framework of a wooden door with nails, roses and lion's heads is quite logically applied to a bronze door. Of the 28 reliefs the twenty above represent scenes from the life of the Baptist, and the eight below depict *Virtues* with Gothic inscriptions. Compared with the restless, pictorially overcrowded high relief of his Pisan precursors, Andrea gives us a lower, simple, clear relief which complies with the laws of plastic art and almost takes us back to the golden age of Greece. The *Virtues* recall, as far as subject is concerned, the *Virtues* and *Vices* by Giotto (in Padua), but they have more repose and sculpturesque character. The historical scenes have few figures which are kept as far apart as possible, no receding backgrounds, and as many accessories as are required for suggesting the locality. Giotto's pictures appear here trans-

lated into the terser expression of plastic style. The narrative is as clear as Giotto's, the expression even more concentrated. Details are borrowed from Giotto, such as the violinist in Herod's Feast which is no less characteristic and even on a higher artistic level than Giotto's version of a few years before. Andrea has more tenderness and more sense of beauty than we find in the incisive work of Giotto who only wished to master his subject and to make it clear. He has no dramatic grandeur, but is a novelist who looks with a kindly eye upon the serious side of life.

Bronze casting was not an easy matter in Florence and could not be done without the help of a Venetian craftsman. Years were needed for it, so that with increasing knowledge and with the translation of his models into a new technique Andrea had to start his work again from the beginning. He was assisted by some Florentine goldsmiths. When the bronze doors were finally fixed on their hinges (1336), Florence was jubilant. The Signori came from their palace, and, accompanied by the foreign ambassadors, assisted as though it were a national event.

Giotto died in January of the following year. For the last three years he had been architect of the *Campanile*, and was succeeded in this function and in that of a sculptor by Andrea (until 1342 or 43). Of the 26 hexagonal reliefs of the lowest section, the first 21, from the Creation of Man on the West, to Pheidias and Apelles on the East front, are the combined

work of Giotto and Andrea, which is hardly surprising after Andrea's success with the Baptistry gates. But where is the line of demarcation between the two artist's work? Giotto designed at least the majority of the reliefs, and modelled part of them himself. For this we have abundant proof in Ghiberti's treatise. Why should he not have handled the chisel, just as the sculptor Orcagna handled the brush? Giotto is probably responsible for the entire West front: the Creation of Adam and Eve, Adam and Eve at work (fig. 28), Jabal squatting with crossed legs under a skin tent and watching his flock which is guarded by an extremely realistic dog (fig. 29), then Jubal, Tubalcain and Noah's Vintage, and on the North front: Pheidias and Apelles; Andrea on the South for the horseman and the women at the loom, and on the East side for the ploughman and the charioteer.

A hundred years later Luca della Robbia added to the cycle on the North Florence.



Fig. 30. *Orpheus*, by Luca della Robbia.  
*Campanile*.



Fig. 31. Detail from Orcagna's Paradise.  
Strozzi Chapel, S. Maria Novella.

front an encyclopaedia of instruction in five reliefs (1437—40). They are unequal in execution. The artist put his whole heart only into two of them: Grammar and Orpheus who as an itinerant musician with a travelling hat has settled down in the midst of a delightful paradise of animals (fig. 30). The fine and broad chisel-work on these two suggests Luca's technique.

Andrea died in 1349. Nothing remains of his statues for the Cathedral façade which had been designed by Giotto. A figure of Boniface VIII, now inside by the entrance wall, a very unimportant Gothic work, is far too bad for him.

*Andrea Orcagna* (d. 1368),

a contemporary of Giotto's pupil Taddeo Gaddi, takes a curious position in this circle of pictorial and plastic art. His teacher in painting was not Giotto, but his elder brother Leonardo. He is first mentioned as a painter in 1343, and his quiet conception appears clearly influenced by Sienese painting. We have met him already as architect and sculptor of Or San Michele. As a sculptor he is not mentioned before 1352, and is supposed to have been a pupil of Andrea Pisano, which is not improbable, to judge from the small octagonal reliefs of the tabernacle. True enough, in the chief piece, the *Death of Mary*, the wild crowding of figures is as far removed from Andrea, as from Giotto, and takes us back to Giovanni Pisano. And now, as painter, he suddenly reveals an entirely new aspect. In the Strozzi chapel of S. Maria Novella we have first of all three frescoes: opposite the entrance the Last Judgement with Dante among the elect, Paradise on the left (fig. 31), and Hell on the right. The latter, ascribed to his brother Nardo, has been entirely repainted and is only notable as a map-like illustration of Dante without artistic value. In the Last Judgement and Paradise, which are both Andrea's, we find

long rows of quiet saints with devout faces, and between them delicate, lovely angels—the contemplative world of the Sienese, without excitement and without action. Finally there is Andrea's signed *altarpiece*, dated 1357 (fig. 32) a polyptych in a rich Gothic, arched frame: Christ, enthroned in the centre, hands the Book and the Key to the kneeling SS. Thomas Aquinas and Peter; other saints stand unconcerned under the arches at both sides—a stiff ceremony with conventional heads. Unlike Giotto's figures, Orcagna's have not sufficient individuality to impress one's memory. His painting marks no progress, but his quiet solemnity, so suitable for a devotional picture, and a certain superficial splendour gained him the esteem of his contemporaries.



Fig. 32. Altarpiece by Orcagna in the Strozzi Chapel, S. Maria Novella.

Close by, adjoining the first, smaller cloisters (Chiostro Verde) of S. Maria Novella, is the former chapter hall of the Dominicans, which was in 1566 given to the Spaniards living in Florence. This square *Cappella degli Spagnuoli* is decorated with frescoes on the four walls and on the ceiling. On the dark entrance-wall are scenes from the life of SS. Dominic and Peter Martyr, whilst opposite is a large "Crucifixion", with "Christ carrying the Cross" on the left and "Limbo" on the right. All these Giottesque works are of no artistic importance; at the most we can see that the Way to Calvary is somewhat confused, and that on the Eastern segment of the vault the Ship of Peter with its complete rigging is rather neatly executed. On the West wall with the Triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas, the saint is seated before an open book in the centre under a Gothic tabernacle. At his sides are in a straight line ten



Fig. 33. East Wall of the Cappella degli Spagnuoli, S. Maria Novella.

prophets and evangelists, and at his feet grovel three conquered heretics. Below can be seen Gothic pews with men and women seated in two orderly rows. They represent Virtues, Sciences and Arts, 28 in number.—More varied and interesting is the picture on the East wall: The Church militant and triumphant (fig. 33). In three sections, one above the other like the stories of a house, it shows the struggle on Earth, the heavenly Paradise, and Christ in glory. The middle storey has a slanting floor, and is quaintly subdivided, smaller figures being introduced into the lower compartment. This is artistically awkward, yet more pleasing than the tedious geometry of the West wall. Below are seated in a row the Pope, the Emperor, Thomas Aquinas and a few more Saints. At the feet of the Pope is a small group of sheep, the symbol of his flock. The human flock has assembled on level ground, clergy and laymen in groups, standing or kneeling, conversing and praying. Further to the right are some Dominican friars, demonstrating, preaching and converting, and at their feet their counterparts, black and white dogs that have attacked and overthrown some wolves or jackals. The central section shows the heavenly

Paradise. Peter with the key stands under the gate; behind him a dense crowd of saints. Without, before the gate of heaven, Dominican friars introduce them to celestial life. To the right the World and its pleasures. On the trees are small figures gathering fruit. Others disport themselves in long garments; they sojourn in the low compartment; above them on a plank are seated four nobles of both sexes, with violin, harp, a pet animal and a falcon, a mundane party that seems ill suited to this celestial air. This quite unusual group recalls so clearly a similar, more expressive group in the "Triumph of Death" in the Pisan Campo Santo, that the connection is obvious. There cannot be a moment's doubt, that the unknown master of the *Triumph of Daeth* has furnished the original. He is altogether a different man, an artist of a higher order, in idea as well as in expression and composition. The arrangement on the fresco of the Spanish chapel is mechanical and clumsy, the use of entirely different proportions in the figures inartistic and so childish, that the Dominicans must needs always exceed the others in size; the painting is slick and soulless.

We do not know who has executed these frescoes. Taddeo Gaddi and the Sienese Simone Martini, mentioned by Vasari, are out of the question. Simone moreover died in 1344, long before these parts of the refectory were painted. If the painter of the Triumph of Death combines, about 1350, Giottesque ideas with the manner of the Sienese painters, and if about the same time Sienese influences are perceptible in Orcagna, the painting of the Spanish Chapel shows us a compilation of the same elements, only a little later as regards time, but on a far lower artistic level. Perhaps this compiler was the same Andrea da Firenze who painted in the Campo Santo in Pisa the first part of the story of St. Regnier. At least both works have some resemblance, as was first noticed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle.

Giotto's direction was followed by another painter, *Spinello Aretino*, who died in 1410, and whose unequal and sometimes very carelessly painted frescoes can be found in many parts of Tuscany, a spirited, dazzling artist, full of ideas and only rarely insipid. His Life of St. Benedict in 16 scenes in the sacristy of S. Miniato, about 1385, is unquestionably his most important and, even in its state of complete repainting, his most interesting work. Here we find once more Giotto's manner of narration, but with great exaggerations in gesture and expression, as in King Totilas staggering back into the circle of his horrified followers from the saint who predicts his death (fig. 34).

If trecento painting had so much to say in Florence, what had become of Sculpture, if we except Andrea Pisano and Orcagna's tabernacle? On many buildings we find marble reliefs and now and then some decorative statuettes, furthermore a large number of reliefs in burnt clay, and finally a few tombs.

A comparison of such isolated examples with the Gothic sculpture of the North will leave an unfavourable impression, but it must be remembered that they fertilized the soil on which the sculpture of the Renaissance was to grow. We will confine ourselves to a few sculptors who have worked for the Cathedral and Or San Michele. In doing so we may consider an artist who really belongs to the Renaissance, for in these modest surroundings he may leave a more favourable impression than he would in the company of more brilliant talents.



Fig. 34. King Totilas and St. Benedict, by Spinello Aretino. S. Miniato.

*Nanni d'Antonio di Banco* was, according to Vasari's dates (1373—1420), at least twelve years older than his friend Donatello, but with his hesitating realism, soon fell behind his stronger companion. His temperament is gentle, his sense of beauty clear, and his character entirely personal, notwithstanding the antique convention to which he adheres. *Niccolò d'Arezzo*, who died in 1421, is more archaic, notwithstanding his very delicate technique. The younger *Ciuffagni* (1385—1456), a Gothic, who starting from Ghiberti whom he assisted with his bronze gates, subsequently drifted towards Donatello, has no personal method of expression at all.

On the second porch on the South side of the Cathedral we find small human figures and animals in rising scroll-work, coarse and clumsy in treatment, and executed about 1400 by a German sculptor, Pietro di Giovanni, whom the Opera del Duomo also entrusted with numerous small and large statues. But the animals are full of life, the leaves freer and more natural than is generally the case in Italian Gothic, and the nude angels, notwithstanding their plumpness, have a certain roguish gaiety which might almost be called grace. The corresponding porch on the Northside has similar reliefs, but worked with Italian elegance and introducing Renaissance motifs beside Gothic forms. This porch was commenced in 1408 by Niccolò d'Arezzo and continued and finished by Nanni and his father and brother. The best of the small figures are probably by Nanni. What is certainly his work, and his last and best, is the famous "Madonna of the Mandorla" relief above the arch (fig. 35). Whilst working at this he had in his mind Orcagna's relief on the tabernacle of Or San Michele. But his Madonna has infinitely more soul, more grace in movement and draping. The two angels leaning against her lap have all the charm of the blossoming Renaissance, and the larger angels who surround the Mandorla are likewise more graceful, more animated, and more convincing in action than Orcagna's. Peculiar to Nanni is the exaggerated slenderness of the proportions.

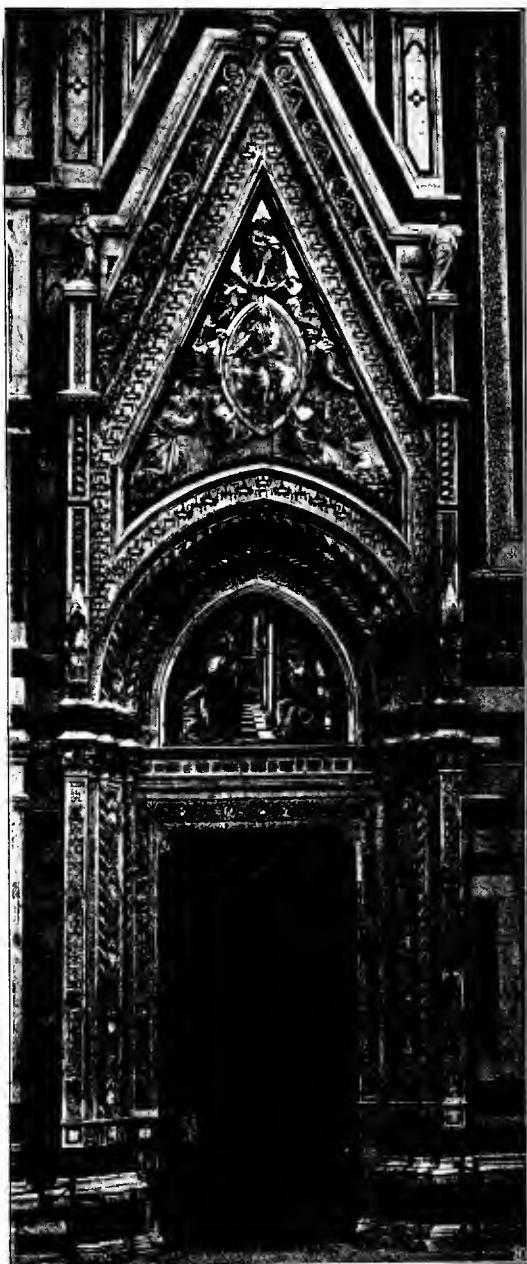


Fig. 35. Cathedral, North Side. Porta della Cintola.



Fig. 36. Group of Saints, by Nanni di Banco.  
Or San Michele.

workmanship, and therefore the more tedious. Nanni di Banco, on the other hand, holds his own even with Ghiberti and Donatello. His St. Eligius with mitre, staff, and book, and elegant draping, probably the first of his works on this building, is certainly a fine figure, not grand, but dignified. The Gothic style seems at it were smoothed, ennobled, or at least simplified by the study of the antique. The bas-relief on the pedestal shows the patron saint of the

In the dark chapels behind the choir have now been placed the large figures of the seated *Evangelists*, originally intended for the old Cathedral front and commissioned since 1408. Only Donatello, with his St. John, has turned his task to good account. The St. Mark by Niccolò d'Arezzo is indifferent and affected; the sleepy St. Mark by Nanni di Banco is hardly more interesting, though of better workmanship; but the St. Matthew by Ciuffagni is entirely expressionless and unquestionably the poorest of all the figures. And this feeble sculptor received order upon order from the Opera del Duomo: the Joshua in the right aisle (sometimes believed to be an early work of Donatello's), the Esaias (wrongly called Ezechiel) in the left aisle, and the small St. Stephan on the outside above the northern porch.

Among the statues of *Or San Michele*, too, the feeblest of all has with good reason been given to Ciuffagni: the slender and weakly St. James who has nothing to tell us, save that he is a Gothic saint of the kind one has met over and over again. It is not bad, but rather clever in arrangement and

blacksmiths shoeing a demoniacal horse. The *group of four saints* of the masons and carpenters (fig. 36) is remarkable for its wide, draped niche and for the antique treatment of the drapery on the figures, though the gathered border is not derived from Greek statues, but from the cloth manufacturers of Florence. The socle relief with the workshops of the guilds continues in excellent manner, after a lapse of eighty years, the simple, clear art of Giotto and of Andrea Pisano on the Campanile. Finally the patron saint of the bootmakers, Philip, in his woollen cloak over a modest smock, and with the head of a peasant, has nothing left of antique posing or elegance or studied decorum: he is quite natural and realistic, and has already some of that coarse ugliness which was afterwards carried further by Donatello.

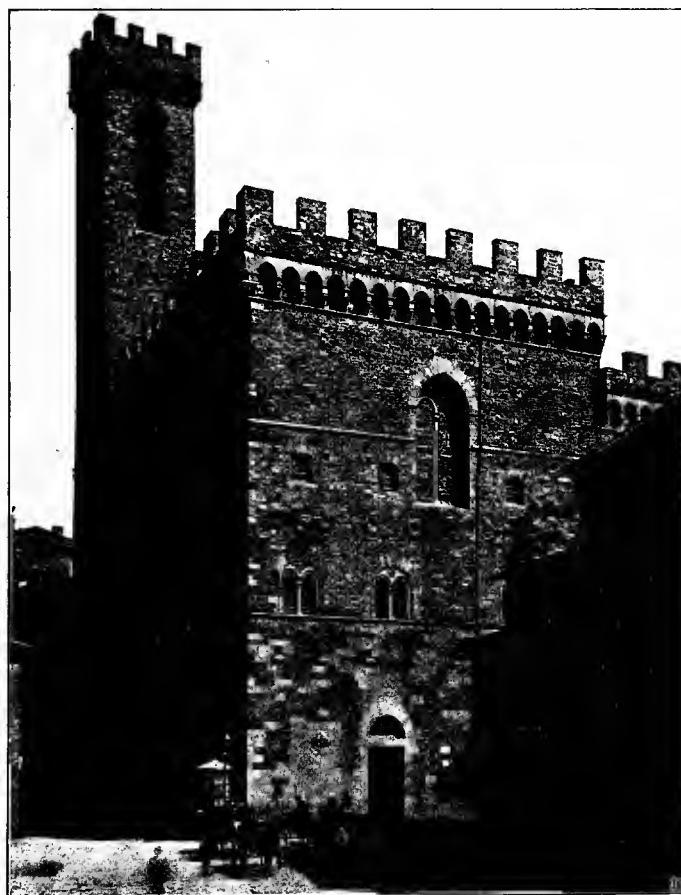


Fig. 37. Palazzo del Podestà (Bargello).



Fig. 38. Court of the Bargello.

## VIII. GOTHIC SECULAR ARCHITECTURE.

BARGELLO AND PALAZZO VECCHIO. LOGGIA DE' LANZI. BIGALLO.

THE two government buildings of Florence, as seats of the highest officials, are planned on a grand scale—enlarged castles externally, commenced regardless of future symmetry, and continued according to the demands of successive periods. Comparatively small windows, arranged side by side without grouping, and sometimes disposed irregularly, of different size down to square loopholes, are broken into the massive walling. Porches are not introduced as leading features. The chief impression is produced by the battlements and the lofty tower which is not placed in a central position. The tower side of the smaller of these buildings, the Palazzo del Podesta (fig. 37) now called *Bargello* after the chief of the police, who resided here at the time of the Grand Dukes, was commenced in 1255 for the Capitano del Popolo (according to Vasari by Agnolo Gaddi). In the 14<sup>th</sup> century the other parts and the top storey were added, as well as the original courtyard with its arcades and commanding staircase (fig. 38). This and the interiors are

now arranged as a museum of Florentine sculpture. Whilst the side turned towards the via Ghibellina has been given a regular façade with two rows of windows, the other sides show the difference of the periods of building, even in the different materials.



Fig. 39. Palazzo Vecchio.

The *Palazzo Vecchio* is in its present form a shapeless irregular colossus, with interrupted rows of windows and narrow doors (fig. 39). Its effect is based on a massiveness which almost dwarfs the Square, on the projecting upper storey and the tower which is placed dangerously close to the battlements, and finally on the appeal made to our imagination by a monument rich in memories. The Signori, who gave the palace its name, and the councils summoned by them, met here in the time of the Republic. The building was commenced in 1398 by Arnolfo and

continued after his death (1401) until about 1414. The front facing the Square is of strong, rustic walling, primitive, and without the artistic intentions of the Renaissance architects. The South front, in the Via della Ninna, is also solidly worked; less so the North front; and the disconnected, patched-up continuations here and along the Via dei Gondi and at the back down to the Via Leoni are only saved by the narrowness of these streets. The superstructure on the tower dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. About the same time the courtyard,



Fig. 40. Court of the Palazzo Vecchio.

which is unfortunately quite dark, was dressed in Renaissance garb (by Michelozzo in 1454), and a hundred years later completely modernised by Vasari (fig. 40). In 1495 Cronaca built a large hall on the first floor for the newly established Council of the 500, the Sala dei Cinquecento, and many more alterations were made in the arrangement of the interiors during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The halls were decorated with carved ceilings and in some cases with frescoes—Ghirlandajo's on the second floor are now badly injured—; and on every floor is still to be found a door with graceful marble framing. But then Vasari appeared on the scene and, commissioned by Duke Cosimo, painted, wherever space permitted, his pretentious, meaningless histories and allegorical

portraits which were intended to perpetuate the shamglory of the Medici in their decline. Would that he had confined himself to the Uffizi and to his Lives of the Artists! Moreover the place is in bad preservation—torn wall-papers in the apartments of Duchess Eleanor of Toledo, crumbling mortar, dust and dirt; a neglected collection of unimportant old pictures; a conspicuous



Fig. 41. Loggia de' Lanzi.

arrangement of flags, taken from no enemy, but left behind by the participants in the last Dante jubilee (1865). The Hall of the Two hundred now serves as meeting place of the Florentine town-council.

When the Signori wanted to address the populace in the Square, they went to the windows or stepped through the door into the open. A platform with a railing was put up in 1349, the "ringhiera" frequently mentioned by the



Fig. 42. Judith, by Donatello. Loggia de' Lanzi.

statuary placed there by the Republic, and the additions made by the Grand Dukes. After the banishment of the Medici Donatello's *Judith* (fig. 42) was taken from their palace, in 1495, and placed in front of the Palazzo Vecchio. In 1504 it had to make room for Michelangelo's *David*, and was removed to

chroniclers. To replace it, the splendid Gothic *Loggia dei Priori* was built in the South corner of the Square, between 1376 and 1382. It is now stupidly named after Duke Cosimo's uninteresting mercenaries (fig. 41). More aptly it was called for some time "Loggia dell' Orcagna", since the building had been resolved upon twenty years before the above date, and may therefore be connected with Orcagna. The execution was entrusted to Benci di Cione and Simone di Francesco Talenti. Closed in at the back and to the right by the neighbouring houses, the cross-vaulted hall opens on the left with a single arch and on the front towards the piazza with three round arches supported by articulated piers. Above the arches and moulding is a high attic, surmounted by a Gothic balustrade on consoles, and terminating in a straight line. This horizontal tendency, together with the general effect and the simple means by which it is produced, makes one forget the Gothic character of the building. The outside sculptural decoration is confined to medallions representing the Virtues, from designs by Orcagna. The consoles of the arches which rise from the back wall within, are supported by genii with bat's wings.

The interior of the loggia has for centuries been a museum of the most varied works of plastic art. A great difference can be noticed between the

the hall of the Priors, which was subsequently filled by the Grand Dukes with Cellini's *Perseus*, Giambologna's *Rape of the Sabines* and *Hercules and Nassus*, and some antique statuary.

Midway between Or San Michele and the Loggia de' Lanzi, both as regards date and style, is the dainty little *Bigallo* on the Cathedral Square. The graceful loggia of the two-storied building is formed by two arches, and all the proportions are in exquisite taste. The exceedingly rich plastic decoration of the loggia is in the style of Orcagna's tabernacle, but the artist who wrought this gem is unknown. The house belonged originally to the Confraternity of the Misericordia, and after the suppression of this Brotherhood in 1425 became the property of the Compagnia del Bigallo. But in 1491 the Misericordia was revived and again took possession of the house, which was turned into a foundling hospital in 1491. The Bigallo is one of the most delightful examples of Florentine architecture.



Fig. 43. Bigallo.



Fig. 44. Lorenzo de' Medici between the Sasetti,  
from Ghirlandajo's Frescoes in S. Trinità.

## IX. THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

### THE MEDICI TO THE DEATH OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT (1492).

THE Republic had prospered in her foreign affairs under the oligarchy of the Albizzi. In a few unimportant campaigns she had, chiefly through payments in coin, acquired several important towns: Arezzo in 1380, Pisa in 1406, then Cortona and Leghorn (1421). Maso degli Albizzi was a clever, energetic man, who was succeeded after his death in 1417 by Niccolò da Uzzano. Maso's son Rinaldo, who was to fight the decisive struggle with Cosimo de' Medici, came, however, to the front soon after.

The line of the *Medici* can be traced back beyond Dante's time to Averardo de' Medici, whose son Averardo was gonfaloniere in 1314 and laid the foundation for the wealth of the Medicean banking business which was carried on by his successors. His great grandson *Giovanni* who became gonfaloniere in 1421, and Palla Strozzi, were considered the wealthiest man of their time. His connections reached far, and as banker of John XXIII. he had sent his young son Cosimo to Constance in the retinue of the Pope (1414). His cautious wisdom, his sense of justice and his simple, amiable manners secured him great

popularity with the people and an influence on public affairs, which seemed dangerous to the ruling party who vainly endeavoured to win him over. An unfortunate war with Milan discredited the government and led to the raising of an income tax, which was opposed by the *grandi*, but carried through by Giovanni's efforts (1427). At his death (1429) he left to his two sons immeasurable wealth and a spotless name. Without personal ambition he had provided for the future of his family, a clever private gentleman who devoted himself to the state, whenever his services were required. His son Cosimo (1389—1464) had meanwhile matured in years and experience and had all the qualifications for a real statesman.

During the next five years he was, like his father, in opposition to the ruling party whose leader, Niccolò da Uzzano, was against violent measures and tried to compromise with Cosimo and his friends, whilst young Rinaldo Albizzi was in favour of a clean sweep, since he rightly considered Cosimo more dangerous than his father Giovanni. The conquest of Lucca, the old capital of Tuscany, seemed to offer him a favourable opportunity for strengthening his party, and he prepared for a war, to which Cosimo was not directly opposed, whilst Uzzano did not conceal his hesitation. The enterprise actually proved more difficult, than Rinaldo had expected. The war dragged on and was terminated in 1433 without any practical results. Uzzano had died meanwhile, and Rinaldo, now sole leader of the party, decided to remove his adversaries with the assistance of a newly elected gonfaloniere, his willing tool. His intentions, as regards Cosimo were worse, than his achievements. He had him imprisoned in the palace of the Signory and would have preferred to remove him by poison or rope, failing which he had recourse to a trial on a charge of high treason. Cosimo was saved by his presence of mind: he bribed the gonfaloniere, and succeeded thus in saving his life, though he was exiled to Padua for ten years. Placidly and gaily he accepted the sentence and placed himself at the disposal of the Signory, wherever he might be. His adherents, including many Medici and two Pucci, had to follow him into exile.

Cosimo lived in Padua and at times in Venice, respected as though he were the ruler of a friendly state, liberal and sociable, keeping up intercourse with influential members of the government. His friends had predicted that his banishment would last one year. The prophecy was fulfilled almost to the day. The people had long wished him back. Everything was prepared by the new gonfaloniere and the eight Signori who took office in September 1434 and who all belonged to Cosimo's party. Rinaldo Albizzi opposed them at first; then, abandoned by his partisans Palla Strozzi and Ridolfo Peruzzi, he accepted the mediation of Pope Eugene IV., at that time an exile at S. Maria Novella, at whose instigation he and his followers disarmed. When he was

afterwards banished, together with Palla Strozzi and so great a number of his partisans that there was hardly a town in Italy, that did not harbour some exiled Florentine, he discovered too late the foolishness of relying on the influence of a man who himself was an exile; he left his native town and died abroad in 1442. Cosimo returned on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October and was received amid great rejoicings. The title "father of the fatherland" was given him at that time.

From the day of his return commences Cosimo's thirty years' rule, which was based entirely on his personality and not specified by office or title. That he once accepted the office of gonfaloniere, was immaterial. The influential positions were given to men on whom he could rely. The elections were by ballot, and the boxes had only to be properly filled by specially appointed officials, to give the desired results. Moreover the Signori were generally appointed by their predecessors, and therefore indirectly by Cosimo.

The new Signory for November and December caused further banishments and even executions of members of the vanquished party. Cosimo was, on the whole, a kind master; but when his friends now wanted to moderate his severity, he said that a state could not be governed with a rosary, and that a new supply of the finest patricians could be cut out of a piece of scarlet cloth. The Alberti and other partisans of his were recalled, but most of the *grandi* were reinstated in their rights as citizens, though due care was taken that they should in future have no influence. The exiles in foreign towns, some of whom were men of great means, like Palla Strozzi, were still a danger. Cosimo met it by treaties with foreign rulers, proving to them that their interests were identical on this point. Knowing himself to be safe in Florence after the fall of the Albizzi, as long as his foreign policy did not lead to trouble, he conceived the idea of an advantageous balance of powers: in the North Milan and Venice, in the South the King and the Pope; a cautious policy might give Florence the control of the scales. And his theory had practical success.

Wars were now conducted almost entirely with mercenaries in want of employment, and Florence could afford to pay. Warfare had become an art, and this age had many famous virtuosi: Francesco Sforza was Cosimo's friend and captain of the Venetians and Florentines in 1434; Niccolò Piccinino fought for Milan, and other notable leaders took service where they could. Real battles were fought no longer: nothing but manoeuvring, striking and breaking camp, and a little plundering.

Cosimo had renewed an alliance with Pope Eugene IV., who still sojourned in Florence, and with the Venetians. It was directed against Milan, and in 1440 the Florentines actually succeeded in beating the Milanese under Picinnino in a cavalry encounter near Borgo S. Sepolcro. In the next year peace was made. When Sforza became Duke of Milan (1450), Cosimo joined him against

Venice and had the satisfaction, that luck turned against the Venetians who had been successful as his allies. The war commenced in 1452; Sforza held the field against Venice, and King Alfonso's son Ferrante invaded Tuscany. Nothing of importance happened, and a threatening general danger—the capture of Constantinople by the Turks—induced the Pope to mediate between the exhausted parties in 1454. Peace was accepted by the King and Venice, whom Cosimo's banking business had got into financial troubles.

Cosimo's last ten years passed peacefully. His conduct of foreign affairs had brought him honour, although he had only added Borgo S. Sepolcro and some small districts to the state. He was grieved, that Florence had just failed to acquire Lucca in the first war; Sforza had abandoned his allies out of consideration for his father-in-law, the Duke of Milan, and forced them to make peace with Lucca (1438). He promised to conquer the town for them, when he should be Duke of Milan, but never kept this promise, and Cosimo was bitterly disappointed in his old friend. Lucca remained a free town.

Cosimo was now an old man. He found no difficulty in home government; he had always received the special powers which he wanted; until 1455 a *balia* had six times been appointed for five years, and the last term was expiring, when he met with resistance from his own partisans who thought they would gain by a return to the old, democratic constitution. He retired until he was implored to assist in the appointment of a new *balia*. Then Cosimo declared, he would do nothing without the people's will; at least he would not take the responsibility of a matter which might fail. The bold Luca Pitti, the gonfaloniere in August 1458, had to enforce the appointment of a *balia* by threats and violent measures. Luca ruled over Florence like a tyrant; whoever wanted to gain influence had to court his favour. Rich citizens, corporations and whole parishes forced presents and contributions upon him for the Royal palace which he was building after Brunelleschi's plans, and which was to surpass the palace of the Medici. He and his partisans employed the power and treasure of the state for their own means, whilst Cosimo had always used his own means to help others and, above all, to beautify the town. His fellow citizens now groaned under a yoke which became more unbearable every year, and longed for their former condition. Though he no longer took an active part, his personal influence was undiminished, and his whole life seemed nothing but brightness, happiness and kindness.

The earlier and later Florentines held him in esteem for having firmly guided the state without having recourse to the mailed fist, and for having lived the modest life of a private gentleman, in spite of his sovereign power. Brought up as business-man against his inclination, he was enabled by the wealth of his house and by his position as leading banker of his time, successfully to

mingle in Italian politics. His tasks as ruler were evolved from his business principles, but his bold and grand manner of attending to them is unique in the history of the relations between private capital and high politics.—He must have viewed with satisfaction the increasing wealth and spreading business of his town, the flourishing condition of art and industry. A council of both Churches, summoned to Ferrara by Eugene IV. in 1438 and soon after transferred to Florence, was attended by hundreds of Orientals, including the Byzantine Emperor and Patriarch with gorgeous retinues. The Greek language was then heard, and learned men gathered around an eloquent commentator of Plato with whom the West was for the first time brought in touch. Cosimo, then 50 years of age, was so impressed, that philosophic disputations became his favourite amusement and that he founded a Platonic Academy formed by a circle of sympathetic friends. His young favourite Marsilio Ficino, a member of this Academy, acquired great distinction.

Cosimo's passions were book-collecting and building. The first was not concerned with printed books, readily obtainable in the market, but with unique manuscripts, which were esteemed for their artistic execution and valued far higher than the productions of the printing-press. Cosimo bought whole collections and single manuscripts, wherever his agents could find them; others he had copied under the supervision of Vespasiano da Bisticci. He founded two libraries, one in S. Marco, the other in the Badia near Fiesole; both are now part of the Laurenziana, the later Medicean library near S. Lorenzo. His grandson Lorenzo found that his family had spent on buildings, charities and taxes from 1434—1471 a sum which would now be equivalent to 32,000,000 lire. This period only includes six years of Piero and Lorenzo, all the rest is Cosimo's time.

Cosimo's art patronage differs from that of his more versatile and artistic grandson by being more extravagant and more in favour of the Church. Advised by Eugene IV. he commenced at an early time to ease his conscience from the weight of property which had not always been acquired by fair means. His liberal hand and his help in visible works of piety reached beyond Florence and Italy. In rebuilding S. Lorenzo his father Giovanni had employed Brunelleschi and Donatello. At his death the parish church of the Medici was far from finished and Cosimo retained the services of these two artists, and gave further commissions to Donatello. His principal architect was Brunelleschi's successor Michelozzo, originally a goldsmith-sculptor, who built for him the Medici chapel in S. Croce and the convent of S. Marco which Cosimo gave to the Dominicans, and within the walls of which, among Fra Angelico's frescoes, he spent many an hour of quiet meditation. Michelozzo also designed the family-palace in the town and the chapel of the Annunziata in the Church of the same name (1448). We do not know who built the Villa Careggi, his favourite country-seat, where he

spent his last days, and the imposing Badia below Fiesole. The great painters of the period, who attracted him most, were Filippo Lippi and Benozzo Gozzoli who had to decorate his chapel in the Medici Palace with frescoes of the Journey of the Magi to Bethlehem (fig. 45). The art called into being by Cosimo has the grand, serious character of the artists of his time, whilst his more worldly grandson, with his refined personal taste, directed art into particular channels, so that it became the expression of a completely changed period.

Of Cosimo's two sons the younger, Giovanni, in whom he had placed the greatest hope, died before him; *Piero*, the elder, was worthy and kind, but not very talented, and of weak physique (fig. 46). He had now reached the age of 48, and had always been under his father's guidance. As heir to an immeasurable and not very safely invested fortune, he had to rely on the help of a dishonest adviser, Diotisalvi Neroni. Cosimo had never inquired, who his debtors were. Piero now had the loans collected, made several families bankrupt and himself unpopular. There was a clamour for liberty, for government by proper magistrates, for elected priors; and as the term of the present *balia* was nearing its end, efforts were made to prevent the establishment of a new one. Piero gave way. Two brothers Soderini, Niccolò and Tommaso, had hitherto sided with the Medici. Now Niccolò, as gonfaloniere for November and December 1465, allowed himself to be played as trump-card against Piero. The crowd paid him demonstrative homage, to show that he, and not Piero, was master of the town. Niccolò, the Neroni, Agnolo Acciajuolo, and Luca Pitti conspired against Piero. Their opposition caused trouble to his foreign policy, when Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, Cosimo's unreliable friend died in 1466, and his son Galeazzo made the continuance of the alliance dependent on a loan from Florence. At last they decided to remove Piero who was lying ill at Careggi, and to make themselves masters of the town by force of arms. But a traitor had informed him of their plot and he forestalled them. In September 1466 a gonfaloniere of his party took office, summoned the people, and formed a new *balia* which arranged everything according to the wishes of the Medici. As the conspirators went into voluntary exile, Piero was saved further measures. Luca Pitti had been won over by Piero's promises, and abandoned his comrades and his vaunted cause of liberty. He was allowed to



Fig. 45. Cosimo de' Medici, from Benozzo Gozzoli's Frescoes in the Palazzo Riccardi.



Fig. 46. Piero de' Medici, by Mino da Fiesole.  
Bargello.

remain, but was cut by everybody; his friends renounced him and even demanded the return of presents; his house was shunned and the very workmen refused to continue building the proud palace which remained unfinished. He was a man without honour.

Piero was not to enjoy his victory. The exiles endeavoured to shake his credit in Rome and stirred up Venice to a war against Florence to overthrow the Medici and thus give Venice a free hand against the weakened Duke of Milan. In Venice the new emigrants were supported by an influential fellow-countryman, Giovanni Francesco, son of Palla Strozzi who had been exiled

more than thirty years before. The noble Palla whose absence was a real loss to Florence had vainly nourished the hope of returning, until he died in Padua (1462) at the age of ninety. His son who lived at Ferrara commanded a large fortune and enormous credit. The Doge thought the enterprise promising, and the old warrior Colleoni—immortalized by Verrocchio's equestrian monument—was to invade Florentine territory. Piero had renewed his alliance with Milan and Naples. The armies faced each other, a few encounters took place and a lengthy engagement near Bologna (1467), but the exiles' hopes of a general rising against the Medici were frustrated, and thus the trouble did not lead to serious war. All parties were pleased when Pope Paul II. made peace between them in the Spring of 1468.

Piero only lived another year, in bad health, in his Villa Careggi. On the occasion of his eldest son Lorenzo's marriage, he had the final satisfaction of offering the Florentines festivities of unprecedented splendour. Cosimo married his two sons and two of his granddaughters to members of Florentine families; Piero gave his successor a Roman Princess of the Orsini family as spouse. Before the engagement was settled, the ambitious aspirations of his house were already causing displeasure. Now, after the entry of the Princess into Florence (June 1469), there was no end of fêtes: banquets, balls and pageants followed in rapid succession; a real cavalry fight took the place of the customary tourney, and a realistic storming of a fortress was one of the features. Only a mighty house, whose heir was destined for great things, could act thus. But the future *Magnifico* was as yet a young man who had to pass through many a severe trial.

It was by no means settled that he was to inherit his father's position, but it was in the interest of the leading men, the so-called first citizens of Florence, headed by Tommaso Soderini, not to expose the existing oligarchy to uncertain changes. They characteristically called him and his younger brother Giuliano the "First men of the State". In spite of his youth Lorenzo had been trained for the conduct of state affairs; he was not Cosimo's equal as politician and diplomat, but far above him in general culture and personal brilliancy. Cosimo was serious and rather taciturn, though when necessity arose he could speak pointedly and brilliantly. But Lorenzo was an accomplished orator, fascinating in conversation since he mastered all topics of politics, literature and art. His voice was rough and his figure insignificant. None of the Medici were good-looking, but Lorenzo was positively ugly. But the charm of his vivacity and his irresistible power of persuasion made one forget this, as soon as he commenced to speak. Lorenzo was a protector and a carefully educated connoisseur of all the branches of culture: he advanced the knowledge of Latin at the University of Pisa, founded by him in 1473; of Greek by the establishment of a special school in Florence and by the endowment of the Laurenziana with manuscripts acquired abroad by Poliziano and the Greek Lascaris, and by printed works of Florentine presses. He tried himself in all the different styles of Italian poetry; he was a clever and subtle imitator of Petrarch and was happy in the treatment of popular subjects which he loved to recite to his friends and to the populace. But he lacked a gift of eminent importance for a ruler—the interest in business. Management and calculation, which had been Cosimo's forte, were repulsive to him. The result was loss of a great part of his fortune. Already in 1478 he had to borrow 60000 ducats from his cousins; the branches of his bank in Lyons, Milan and Bruges had no proper head and were forced partially to liquidate; the difficulties increased and the finances of the state became involved in the trouble. The collected funds of the marriage portions (*monte delle doti*) were touched in 1485, only one fifth was paid out and interest at the rate of seven, and afterwards three percent paid for the balance. When in 1490 a declaration of bankruptcy of either Lorenzo or the Exchequer became unavoidable, the Council of the Seventy decided in favour of the second course. The interest on the public debt (*luoghi di monte*) was reduced from  $3\%$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}\%$ , and the capital fell to less than half its value. There was reason to say that Lorenzo had used public funds for his private purposes, whilst his grandfather had always used his own means to benefit the public. A comparison between Cosimo's and Lorenzo's conduct of public affairs in general would be equally unfavourable for the latter.

In the summer of 1470 the Signory had been given the customary powers

for five years. Soon after, the new master showed such energy as had not been expected from one so young in years. In Volterra the exploitation of the recently discovered alum deposits had caused a quarrel between the municipality and the Florentine capitalists. The town complained to the Signory of Florence in a manner which was construed as a revolt against their sovereignty, and whilst the older men, like Tommaso Soderini, were in favour of a peaceful settlement, Lorenzo was for extreme severity and suppression of the revolt by force of arms. A considerable army under the Count of Urbino had to conquer and devastate the badly defended little town (1472). Lorenzo beamed when his Florentines congratulated him on this first success, but some few began to think that this man must be a little cruel and hard, and Soderini sadly shook his head at the easy victory. Meanwhile heavy clouds were rising over the political horizon.

A new Pope, Sixtus IV., ruled since 1471,—strong, warlike and unscrupulous in his policy. His intention of founding by conquest a central Italian principality for one of his nephews, Girolamo Riario, Lord of Forlì, was foiled by the strong Republic, the natural protector of the threatened Romagna towns. Florence had, in 1474, renewed her alliance with Milan and Venice. The Pope entered into a counter-alliance with Ferrante of Naples, and both induced Frederic of Urbino, who was till then captain of the Florentine army and considered the best soldier in Italy, to join their side. Sixtus raised him to the rank of a Duke. Then he waited to see if Florence could not be isolated, or at least separated from Venice. But, although some Tuscan towns were fermenting, the ever threatening war did not break out, and four years brought no change in the constellation of the five powers. Sixtus had to change his plans. He had recently given the Pisans a new Archbishop who did not suit the Florentines. Besides, the influential *Pazzi* family had long been hostile to the Medici: the wealthy old Jacopo lived in retirement, his nephew Carlo had lost a heritage through a judgment influenced by Lorenzo, and another nephew, Francesco, who lived in Rome, was now the Pope's banker and an intimate friend of his nephew Girolamo. How, if the two young Medici could be removed?

Thus the *Pazzi conspiracy* originated under the Pope's patronage. In April 1478, during mass at the Duomo, the often recounted attempt was made on the life of the two Medici. Lorenzo was only slightly wounded, and the harmless, gentle Giuliano, a popular, pleasure-loving man lost his life under the daggers of the assassins. Some years previously he had given a grand tourney in honour of an admired lady, the splendour of which had long been a topic in Florence. It inspired Poliziano to an epos in mythological guise, which now remained unfinished. A rising prepared by the conspirators was soon

put down; Jacopo and Francesco Pazzi, the Archbishop of Pisa and many others had to pay for it with their lives. Lorenzo passed through the catastrophe with honours; he was given a body-guard for his protection: the tyranny was heralded. He might have been delivered to the Pope who was angered at the execution of his Archbishop and kept the thunderbolt of excommunication in readiness. Only thus could war be avoided, and Lorenzo was ready for the sacrifice; but the Republic made his guilt her own, and in the summer of 1478 the armies of the Pope and of Ferrante invaded Tuscany and quickly showed their superiority over the Florentines who were abandoned by Venice and whose conduct of war was lamentable. Their captains, the Counts of Ferrara and of Mantua, quarrelled. After a disgraceful defeat by the Neapolitans in the second year, everything seemed lost for Florence, and Lorenzo resorted to diplomacy. He quietly sailed for Naples in December 1479, as negotiations with the king seemed more promising, than with the Pope; in Pisa he received a mandate as envoy, which his friends had procured from the Signory. It was a bold step, since the ill-famed Ferrante might have made him disappear—*far morire*—in his domain. At Naples he appeared with sensational splendour as the wealthiest and most liberal of princes. He was vain and loved luxury, but the costly setting was well calculated for the stage on which he now commenced to act. He developed Cosimo's theory of the balance of power in Italy with Florence as the needle of the scales; he showed that a strong Florence wedged in between Venice and the Papal States must be more important to the King, than a Pope without descendants and without a policy which could bind his successor. But was this eloquent Florentine really backed up by his state, or could he be displaced any day by a change of parties in his absence? The cautious Ferrante had to make sure of this, but when two months passed without any change in Florence, he dismissed his guest with full honours, and Lorenzo returned in March 1480 with the much desired peace and a fairly favourable treaty of alliance. Florence was jubilant. But the Pope and the Venetians were not reconciled, and the people were in the habit of forcing their reasoning upon the government on such occasions. Lorenzo and his friends therefore obtained, with the help of the Signory, an important change in the constitution: instead of the many *consigli* one council of seventy men was appointed. The *Otto di pratica* and the *Dieci della guerra* were chosen from the Seventy. Thus all important offices were conveniently vested in a small circle, and when the Saracenes landed in Lower Italy and devastated Otranto, the Pope, the King, and Venice were threatened, whilst Florence was safe and had the advantage that none of them could devote further attention to Tuscany. Sixtus graciously granted the Florentines his pardon and peace, after having once more rebuked their ambassador.

Florence was jubilant, and Lorenzo who was credited with having brought about all this good fortune, was highly honoured.

He had to take part in another lengthy war—the *Ferrarese* war—which brought no losses or honours to the Republic. When Mahomed II. died quite unexpectedly, Italian politics again acquired a new aspect. Venice claimed part of the neighbouring Ferrarese territory—the district North of the Po, with Rovigo and Polesine—which was protected by Milan, Florence and Naples, whilst the Pope supported Venice. A Neapolitan army on the way northwards was beaten by the Papal troops in the marshes of the Campo Morto, near Rome, in the first bloody battle that had been fought for fifty years (1482). Then Sixtus, threatened with a Council, joined the League against Venice which was now successfully attacked by superior forces. But the allies were not in accord, and the needle of the scales, which Lorenzo believed to control, failed on this occasion. Venice secretly arranged with Lodovico il Moro who ruled in Milan for his nephew Giangaleazzo, to retain the territory taken from Ferrara. Florence and the Pope had to agree to the peace, after the proclamation of which Sixtus died suddenly, it is said from vexation (Aug. 1484).

The warlike Sixtus was succeeded by the peace-loving and unimportant Innocent VIII., with whom Lorenzo remained on good terms, and to whose son he married his daughter. He frequently acted as arbitrator between the Pope and the treacherous King of Naples, whom he always treated in a fair spirit. The Moro was as unreliable, as his father had been to Cosimo; nor could Venice be counted on. All these forces were in a constant state of tension, but whilst Lorenzo lived, Italy was spared great wars, and the small wars into which he was forced, resulted on the whole in advantages to Florence. He added Pietrasanta and Sarzana to the territory of the Republic. Siena was too weak to be considered dangerous, and Girolamo Riario was murdered at Forli in 1488.

Lorenzo was neither a great soldier, nor a great statesman. He followed Cosimo's policy, but with less sureness; his combinations were daring and not always successful, and though he steered the state without perceptible loss through all threatening dangers, Florence lost much of the prestige she had enjoyed under Cosimo.

Lorenzo was an ideal tyrant. Nominally the government of the state was in the hands of the Seventy and of a few other bodies, but in reality he alone held the reins with a firm grip. Even when he went to Pisa to devote himself to his beloved university, or when he retired to one of his palaces or villas to follow his artistic and literary pursuits, nothing could be done without his consent. Everything was reported to him, and he kept his eyes even on the private life of his fellow-citizens, on their marriages and on the houses they built. To disguise this tyranny he called himself merely a "Citizen

of Florence", even in his signature. Wisely concerned about the future of his house he arranged the marriages of his elder son Piero and of his daughters; Giuliano was as yet too young. Giovanni, the second, received the cardinal's hat from Innocent VIII, at the age of thirteen. In his foreign relations Lorenzo's extravagance was more than princely. He sacrificed enormous sums on representation and costly presents to foreign rulers, and instilled into his children the idea that such sacrifices were necessitated by their birth and position. Fabulous sums must have been spent on receptions, balls, gala performances, tourneys for which special arms were made of silver and gold, and costumes studded with jewels. The Florentines of course enjoyed this dazzling splendour and idolised the man whom they had to thank for it. When, in the early days of Lorenzo, Galeazzo Mariá, Duke of Milan, and his provoking wife Bona of Savoy, came to Florence, they made a display of such splendour as had not till then been witnessed by the citizens of that town. They came with an enormous train which included 2000 horses, 200 mules and 500 leash of hounds. The Milanese Court excelled all others in extravagance and love of pleasure. It had to be received accordingly, and had left its mark on the erstwhile modest life and tastes of the Florentine citizens. And now, after barely twenty years, when Piero on behalf of his father attended the wedding of Giangaleazzo and Isabella of Naples at Milan (1489), he outdid all the other guests in costly extravagance. So amazing was the costume worn by him in church, that the young couple sent for it to admire it at leisure before dinner, where Piero, of course, appeared in other garments. When Lorenzo's fortune decreased, and his business ventures resulted in losses, he invested his money in land. His love affairs were a chapter in themselves; he followed them with an openness and candour, which shocked even his most easy-going friends.

In his patronage of art Lorenzo is not, at the first glance, overshadowed by Cosimo, as he was in politics. Verrocchio, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo and Filippino, with whom he was closely connected, are indeed no epigones, and the great Leonardo was only three years his junior. To these must be added Andrea della Robbia, the sculptors in marble, and many others whom he employed. Yet, on closer examination, to the quantity of imposing buildings which stand against Cosimo's name, Lorenzo only added the Villa Pozzo a Cajano, a noble and beautiful edifice erected by Giuliano da Sangallo in 1480. For the rest he has to share the honours of art patronage with the Pazzi, the Rucellai, the Strozzi, the Sassetti, the Tornabuoni, and the Martelli. But as collector he surpassed them all, and as connoisseur and creator of the school of art in the Medicean gardens at S. Marco he is beyond comparison. In this school sculpture, the noblest of all arts under Cosimo, was to be revived, stimulated by a unique collection of antique statues and reliefs. Bertoldo, an

old pupil of Donatello, was the teacher, and Ghirlandajo, the most famous fresco painter of Florence, was requested by Lorenzo, to send pupils desirous of becoming sculptors. Rustici, Torrigiano, Montelupo, and Andrea Sansovino were trained in this school. Among those who had been recommended by Ghirlandajo was a youth of fourteen who became Lorenzo's charge and table-companion. His name was Michelangelo, and he was destined to perpetuate the memory of the Medici in immortal marble.

Whilst these younger Medici were thus preoccupied with a worldly and heathen art, a severe admonisher stood outside the gate of their life of pleasure. Savonarola had come from Ferrara to join the Dominicans of S. Marco in 1482. He was not very considerate to the exalted protectors of the convent and encouraged the Florentines to revolt on earth for the sake of heaven, so that Lorenzo transferred his favour to the Augustinian prior and made Giuliano di Sangallo build for him a convent outside the gate which gave this artist his name. It was finished in 1488 and completely destroyed during the troubles of 1529. Savonarola was elected prior of the Dominicans in 1491, whilst Lorenzo was still alive.

The Magnifico was only 42 years of age, but generally in bad health. Whilst he was upon his deathbed, in the following year, the ascetic figure of the great preacher entered his room. The interview was short and was not clearly heard by those who were present. Presumably it touched upon the blood of the Volterrani and the Pazzi, upon funds unrightfully seized, and upon the liberty taken from Florentines, but reports differ in detail, and the only point which seems clearly established, is that the two did not come to terms.

The fanatic monk may have had a clear vision of the immediate future, whilst Lorenzo only knew for certain, that the Florentines had promised the succession to his first-born, and that it was guaranteed by the Pope, by Ferrante of Naples, and even by the Moro. Piero was endowed with enormous strength and addicted to sport, but his intellect was moderate. He had been splendidly educated by Poliziano, and equalled his father in elegant speech and verse, but he was conceited and arrogant, and his highest ambition was to obtain the title of Prince. The political horizon was clouded, and the air was heavy with uncertainty. Lorenzo's death was apprehended with fear and attended by miraculous omens: lightning struck the highest point of the Cathedral, and the beasts in the lion house behind the Palazzo Vecchio became frantic and attacked each other. When Lorenzo had departed, everyone felt that his death marked the end of the happy times.

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Fig. 47. Abraham's Sacrifice, by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi. Bargello.

## X. THE EARLY RENAISSANCE.

BRUNELLESCHI AND GHIBERTI. ALBERTI. DONATELLO. LUCA DELLA ROBBIA. MASACCIO (THE BRANCACCI CHAPEL). CASTAGNO, UCCELLO, DOMENICO VENEZIANO.

THREE artistic monuments announce the arrival of the Renaissance; in sculpture two reliefs of Abraham's Sacrifice, by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi, the result of a competition for the second gate of the Baptistry (1401—2); in painting the frescoes in the Carmelite church, left unfinished by Masaccio at his death in 1428; and in architecture the works of Brunelleschi.

Brunelleschi (1377—1446) and Ghiberti (1378—1455) were contemporaries, but Brunelleschi's was the higher intellect, and whilst Ghiberti was only sculptor, Brunelleschi's versatility embraced the whole range of art. He was architect and sculptor, and though he has not left us any pictures, we know that he studied perspective in drawing and painting, and that Masaccio, the first painter of the Renaissance, was his pupil. The two bronze reliefs for the second gate of the Baptistry (now in the Bargello; fig. 47) follow Andrea Pisano's, as far as the Gothic framing, the arrangement, and the antique draping are concerned. The nude and the heads are finer in Ghiberti's, the attitudes and expression more animated in Brunelleschi's. Brunelleschi surpasses Ghiberti in space composition and is less conventional in his drapery. If Brunelleschi has on the whole more character, Ghiberti has more beauty, and technically his relief, which is cast in one piece, is superior. The Commission decided in favour of

Ghiberti, since Brunelleschi would not share the work with his rival and subsequently devoted himself entirely to architecture.

The two wings of Ghiberti's door, which was fixed in its place in 1424, contain 20 panels with scenes from the life of Christ, and below them 8 panels with figures of the Evangelists and Fathers of the Church (fig. 48). At first sight these reliefs are not unlike Andrea's on the first gate—the same Gothic frames, the same way of telling the story with but few figures. Yet they reveal for the first time the difference between the Gothic and the Renaissance, not so much in the introduction of antique ornamental motifs in the place of

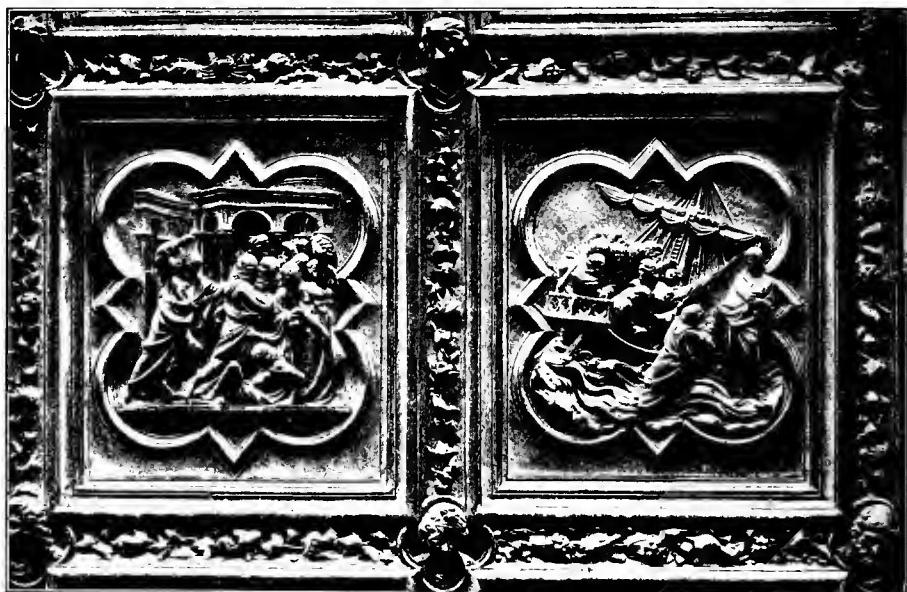


Fig. 48. Baptistry. From Ghiberti's first Door.

Gothic details, not so much in the employment of antique costume, which is at times already to be found with Andrea, but in Ghiberti's true observation of Nature even in her small details, in the expression of life and movement, and in that great feeling for beauty, which can be observed in the general effect and in the lines of every single figure. Take the noble Adoration of the Magi. Though it is inspired by the antique, it is by no means an imitation. Comparison with any antique work will show that his figures are Italian, and continue the local tradition, improving upon it with a sureness which at times almost suggests lack of feeling, whilst with Andrea Pisano one can always trace the sincere struggle of the beginner. Some critics have found this door of Ghiberti's too conventional: it did not realise the expectations roused by his "Abraham's Sacrifice". But in his second door, which was cast in 1452

and given the place of honour on the East-side, facing the Duomo, after the removal of Andrea's door to the South-side, he demonstrated the full greatness of his genius. These *Gates of Paradise*, as they were called by Michelangelo,



Fig. 49. Baptistry. Ghiberti's second Door.

are entirely new in arrangement, conception and style (fig. 49). Each wing has five large panels with stories from the Old Testament. The figures move on the receding planes of the landscape or architectural setting. They grow or vanish according to their intended distance. They vary in numbers, and

are isolated or in dense crowds, as the case may be. Ghiberti admits in his diary, that he wanted to compete in perspective with the painters, and speaks of his own work as being "wrought with wonderful art". He had fortunately none of our modern scruples about pictorial relief, and his colleagues shared his view. It is impossible to overrate the influence of these reliefs on the artists who followed Ghiberti. Even Raphael in his *School of Athens* has retained a clear echo of the last panel, the *Queen of Sheba* (fig. 50). The scene is here represented, as a cultured Florentine might have imagined it as having taken place in his own town, with just that amount of idealizing necessitated by sculpturesque expression which does not permit such realism as that of Masaccio's frescoes.

The wings are enclosed in frieze-like frames with Sibyls and Prophets in niches, and portrait medallions in the corners of each panel. The inner side



Fig. 50. The Queen of Sheba. From Ghiberti's second Door.



Fig. 51. St. Matthew, by Ghiberti,

with the Statuettes of the Annunciation, by Niccolò d'Arezzo. Or San Michele.

Fig. 52. St. Stephan, by Ghiberti,

of the door posts is covered with flat arabesques, the outside with scrollwork and foliage and birds in bolder relief.

Ghiberti surpasses all his rivals in the treatment of bronze, and excels particularly in relating a story in relief with small figures which, though elegant in form, are generally full of feeling. The superb silver shrine in the chapel of St. Zenobius in the Cathedral is an excellent example of his style (1440). In his large statues he does not approach the vigour of Donatello. Whilst still engaged on his first gate, he received the commissions for the three statues

at Or San Michele which he executed in bronze (see pag. 41). His *St. John the Baptist*, draped in Gothic manner, lacks character, and could hardly be recognized without the reed cross. This beginning was not promising, but the next figure, the *St. Matthew*, strikes a very different note by following the antique (fig. 51). He is more like a stately Greek orator, than the publican apostle of the money changers' guild, who is here balancing his open book upright on his left hand, whilst the gracefully curved fingers of his right are raised to his chest. The execution is, of course, perfect in every detail. His last work on this building, the *St. Stephen* who once carried the martyr's palm in his right, is a simple, noble and lovable apparition with perfectly harmonious proportions (fig. 52). With this gentle, soulful youth Christian sculpture has reached the level of the efforts of antiquity. "The highest intentions of the middle ages were realised by a work of the Renaissance" (Schmarsow).

Ghiberti left no notable pupil, but Brunelleschi was followed by three younger men who, like himself, count among the leaders of the Renaissance: the sculptors Donatello (1386—1466) and Luca della Robbia (1399—1482), and the architect Leon Battista Alberti.

*Alberti* was an illegitimate descendent of a family that had been exiled by the Albizzi, and was born in Genoa, probably in 1404. As secretary to Pope Eugene IV. he came to Florence in the summer of 1434, a few months before Cosimo's return. In the same year Brunelleschi completed the cupola for the Duomo, and on New Year's day 1436 the Cathedral was consecrated by the Pope amidst a scene of unprecedented splendour. Young in years, and matured by the impressions of a stormy life, Alberti eagerly took up all the ideas of this fertile period, from classic learning to the aims of the new art which was developing under his eyes. To Brunelleschi he dedicated the Italian edition of his book on painting (1435). The rest of his life he spent partly in Rome, partly in Florence, and in his writings he follows every phase of art and its connection with the practical problems of life. To this day he is the best exponent of the nature of the Renaissance, but his own artistic activity was confined to architecture. But he built nothing himself, since he considered the actual execution unworthy of an inventive mind. His classic bent connected him with Brunelleschi, but he went to extremes, so that he belongs rather to Rome, where he assisted the advent of the architecture of the late Renaissance, than to Florence, where only four traces of his activity have been preserved, which will be considered in another place. He died about 1472.

*Donatello* was 46 years of age when he was called to Rome, where he sojourned in 1432—3, at the same time as Alberti; but he had previously visited the centre of the old world in the company of his master Brunelleschi. Ever since 1425 the growth of the influence of the antique can be traced in

his art which, before that date, appeared to be based on the older, Gothic sculpture. If his statues for the Cathedral and Or San Michele are compared with Ghiberti's and Nanni di Banco's, they appear almost like the work of a Gothic artist. The same date approximately marks the division between his earlier works in the round and his subsequent preference for relief sculpture,



Fig. 53. St. John the Evangelist,  
by Donatello. Cathedral.



Fig. 54. Lo Zuccone, by Donatello.  
Campanile.

and as regards material, between the earlier marble and the later bronze. For the casting Donatello took as assistant the goldsmith-sculptor Michelozzo, for about ten years until 1433. Afterwards, during his ten years' sojourn in Padua until 1453, he trained an entire school of casters and chasers, so that he could devote all his energy to the clay models. He loved modelling in clay as the simplest and quickest method of expression, and produced many busts, statuettes, and reliefs, that were never intended for casting. The execution of his bronzes he could leave to his assistants, and he undertook the chasing only in impor-

tant cases. Hence the inequality of his works and the difficulty of tracing the master's own hands. He must in fact not be considered from the technical point of view. In bronze he was surpassed by Ghiberti, in marble by Luca della Robbia, but in invention and expression of ideas he was unexcelled.

The influence of the antique on Donatello is abundantly apparent in his costumes, attitudes, types, accessories, and ornamental motifs, and technically in his treatment of very flat relief. But all this is only superficial, and not one of his works could be taken for an antique. Donatello's power of observation penetrated far into the essence of things. His aim was nature, the entire physical reality of the human body, but at the same time the spirit and character, and the whole gamut of emotions. He did not strive after Ghiberti's gentle beauty, but invested his figures with strong, individual life. If he wanted to show them in action, he had recourse to many-figured reliefs. In such works his only precursor was Giovanni Pisano, with whom he has much in common, though he is much further ahead of him, than can be explained by the hundred years or so which divide the two artists. In the sixty years of his activity he revolutionised Italian sculpture, and his influence upon his successors exceeded that of all his precursors. He dominates the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as Giotto had dominated the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Sixteen statues are still to be found in Florence, dating from the first twenty years of his artistic activity; eleven of these were made for the Opera del Duomo, three for Or San Michele, and two for S. Croce. The first in date



Fig. 55. St. George, by Donatello.  
Or San Michele.

are two statuettes on piers on the North porch of the Duomo; then follows a David, above life-size and carefully executed, though still lifeless and stiff. Though now in the Bargello, it was made for the Duomo, as was also the colossal seated figure of *St. John the Evangelist*, a mature work, which is now in a dark chapel of the choir (fig. 53). Michelangelo knew it well, and his

Moses, in Rome, recalls this first masterpiece of Donatello's. Quite new in its way is the nameless Prophet (Joshua?) with the life-like portrait head (Poggio?), now in the left aisle of the Duomo. Three of the six statues wrought by Donatello for the Campanile between 1416 and 1426 still retain a certain beauty and a more general, ideal treatment of the features: St. John the Baptist, Abraham and Isaac, and Joshua, in the last two of which he was assisted by Giovanni Rosso, one of the older Gothic sculptors. Very different are the Habakuk, Jeremiah, and the other prophet, the repulsively ugly "Zuccone"



Fig. 56. Wooden Crucifix, by Donatello. S. Croce.

(fig. 54) whose identity cannot be established, though his model and that for the Jeremiah can be named. All these have lean figures with bare necks and beardless faces, sharp features, pensive attitudes, and are dressed like Roman orators. How the Florentines must have been startled by Donatello's daring!

His realism had not gone to such lengths at *Or San Michele*, where his last statue was the *St. George* (now in the Bargello; fig. 55), finished in 1416. This calm, youthful hero is undoubtedly his most beautiful statue. The poise of the figure is perfect, and the form can be felt under the armour by which it is almost completely covered. The head is most expressive, without being a realistic portrait. Another splendid figure is the somewhat earlier *St. Mark*, in a cloak with ample folds, and with a book in his left hand. It is worth

noting how much more character there is in this figure, than in Ghiberti's St. Matthew, to which it bears a certain resemblance. The treatment of the marble is so broad and pithy, that Donatello's patrons could only get reconciled to it, after the statue had been placed *in situ* and could be seen from the point for which its effect had been calculated. The *St. Peter* is a little puzzling and fits in so badly with our ideas on Donatello's art, that Nanni di Banco's name has been mentioned in this connection.

In *S. Croce*, above the chief porch, is the bronze statue of St. Louis



Fig. 57. Wooden Crucifix, by Brunelleschi. S. Maria Novella.

(originally intended for Or San Michele, cast by Michelozzo and completed in 1424), which is interesting in so far as it shows none of the realistic exaggerations to which Donatello was addicted at that time. More remarkable still is the wooden Crucifix (central chapel of left transept; fig. 56) as an instance of this realism carried to its very extreme. Brunelleschi is said to have called it "a peasant nailed to the cross". There is certainly more moderation in his own wooden Crucifix in S. Maria Novella (in a chapel by Giuliano da Sangallo to the left of the choir; fig. 57). In the right aisle of S. Croce is a large relief by Donatello, an "Annunciation" in an elaborately carved frame (fig. 58). It was given by the Cavalcanti, probably before 1430. The decoration is exceedingly rich, whilst the expression of the two nobly conceived figures is gentle

and reserved. On the cornice, at both ends, are two pairs of terracotta angels, holding garlands and gracefully clinging to each other (fig. 59); another pair for the centre has been found recently.

Next follow two life-size bronze statues, made for Cosimo de' Medici probably soon after Donatello's return from Rome in 1433 (Bargello). The one represents *David*, with long locks flowing from under a shepherd's hat, nude, with a carefully modelled body,—the first life-like free-standing nude statue since the days of antiquity (fig. 60). All the details are exquisitely chased: the greaves and sandals, and the head of Goliath on the ground. Equally perfect in finish is the other bronze, an amorse, strangely dressed like an antique Harpocrates, sprightly and saucy, as if it were the expression of an artist's merry whim. Doubts have lately been thrown on the life-like, painted terra-cotta bust of the thin, ugly old Niccolò da Uzzano (Bargello). The delicate profile of the Giovannino, in very low relief on sandstone, heads the long list of the representations of the boy saint, which have become so popular in Florence.

This enumeration does not exhaust Donatello's works in Florence. We have already spoken of the papal tomb and the Magdalen in the Baptistery (pag. 18); we shall meet him again at S. Lorenzo, and must pass the Casa Martelli. Two more works must be mentioned, one in bronze, and one in marble. The Judith, formerly placed on a fountain, with water issuing from the socle, and now in the Loggia de' Lanzi (fig. 42), would have been impossible without the antique, but is nevertheless wholly typical for Donatello. It is recklessly, gruesomely harsh, as though he had wished to avoid all beauty.



Fig. 58. Annunciation, by Donatello. S. Croce.

More pleasing are the very low reliefs on the pedestal, representing a gay bacchanalian crowd of children.

In the *marble work* Donatello treats a subject to which Luca della Robbia devoted his attention at the same time. The works of both can be compared in the well lighted room of the museum of the *Opera del Duomo*, where they are now to be seen (fig. 61 and 62). Donatello's *Cantoria* was ordered in 1434 for the old sacristy under the cupola of the Cathedral, Luca's already in 1431,



Fig. 59. Terra-cotta angels.

Detail of Tabernacle.



Fig. 60. David, by Donatello. Bargello.

and both were in their proper places in 1441. Both are similar in arrangement. Donatello treats the figures of the principal surface as a continuous frieze of gaily romping and dancing children, moving from right to left behind detached pairs of small columns. The background of the relief is covered with mosaic. The restrained decoration between the brackets is bottega work. Even on the principal relief the master's hand can only be traced on the right, whilst the figures on the left are probably the work of an assistant. The execution is sketchy, in due consideration of the dimly lighted position, for which the organ-loft was intended, and a wonderful effect of movement results from the accentuation and amplification of the chief forms. Leaving apart the

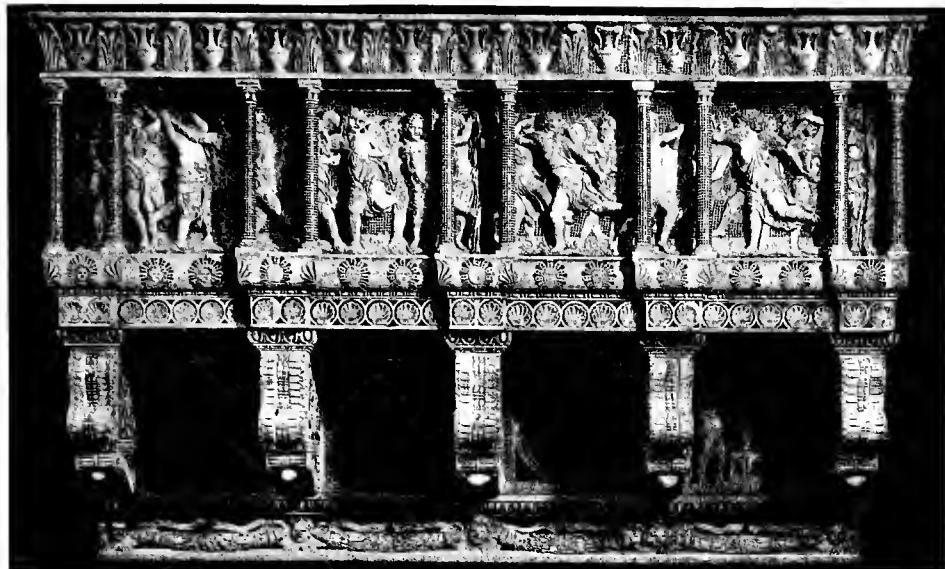


Fig. 61. Cantoria, by Donatello. Cathedral Museum.

antique costume, this wild flight of miniature bacchanalians would have been impossible without the influence of classic art; but in temperament, movement, and expression these figures are Donatello's own creation.

On *Luca della Robbia's* cantoria the figures are arranged in ten panels with altogether classical architectural framework, and include not only children, but also grown-up maidens and adolescent choristers, the former dancing and

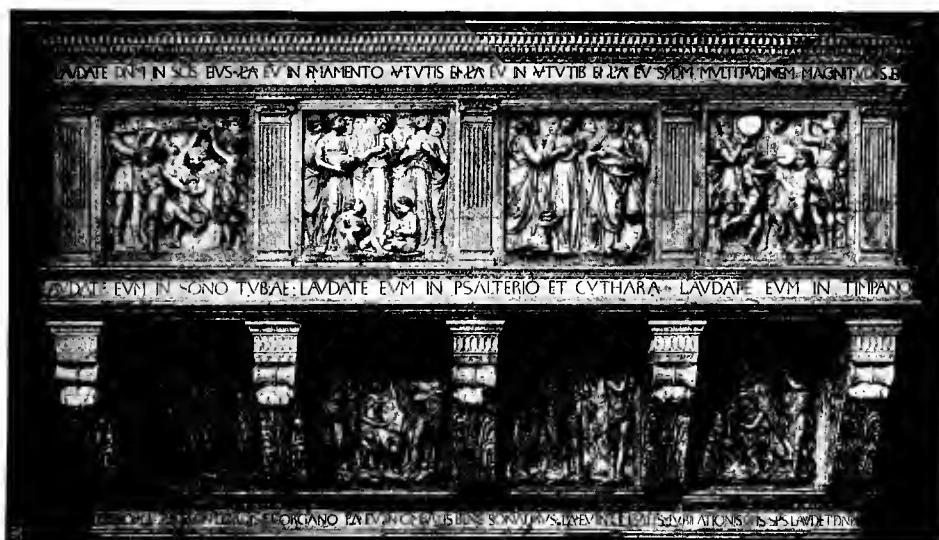


Fig. 62. Cantoria, by Luca della Robbia. Cathedral Museum.

frolicking, the latter in earnest devotion, singing or playing instruments, and all conceived as angels standing on clouds. Of touching beauty are the two panels with singing boys at the sides of the cantoria. The originals, which have been replaced by casts, are now detached, so that they may be seen

without the shadows thrown by the cornice. The very pitch of the voices is expressed in the boys' faces, just as it was ten years earlier in the Van Eyck altarpiece at Ghent. The realistic freshness of their features is quite individual and obviously inspired by Donatello, as nothing like it is to be found in Luca's earlier work. Typical for him are at the same time the gentleness, and winsomeness which express his own soul, the moderation which keeps him from exaggeration, the close relationship with the essential qualities of the antique. In execution these reliefs form a striking contrast to Donatello's. They are most carefully finished in every detail and are intended for close inspection. As works of art they stand on a higher level and are the master's own handiwork throughout. The relief is not raised as high as Donatello's. Though both artists were clearly under the influence of antique sculpture, their subject—the living, pulsing young world of Florence—has invested their work with unmistakable Italian character.



Fig. 63. Bronze Door of the New Sacristy,  
by Luca della Robbia. Cathedral.

Whilst engaged on this most original and brilliant work, Luca was busy with the five marble reliefs on the Campanile (pag. 49). Together with Michelozzo he finally undertook a work in bronze: the door for the New Sacristy of the Cathedral, which had originally been ordered from Donatello (fig. 63). Luca

finished it alone, late in life, and received the last payment for it in 1476. It is divided into square compartments with seated single figures in bold relief, each flanked by two angels. The work is good, but the systematic repetition strikes one as monotonous. Small heads peep out of the corners of each panel, as in Ghiberti's Baptistry doors. It was a thankless task for Luca, especially as he was not accustomed to the material, and the result has moreover suffered from the chasing by another artist's hand. But he is in his happiest vein in the glazed terra-cotta relief of the Resurrection above this door (1443, fig. 64), in the corresponding one over the South door (1446), both white on blue ground, and in two particularly graceful kneeling angels with candelabra, clay figures in the round (1448).



Fig. 64. Resurrection. Majolica Relief by Luca della Robbia. Cathedral.

Before Luca became the great sculptor in marble, he was trained in the school of *clay modelling*, which was flourishing in Tuscany long before his time. It was the art of the people, accessible to everybody; only the wealthy could afford to present the churches with offerings in bronze and marble, but this was the real home art which brought a reflection of beauty into the cottages of the poor, in the shape of small works with few figures, generally reliefs of the Madonna and Child, or the Annunciation, or the Virgin in Adoration. It was less solemn than the art of the Church, and more purely human. Such is the background for Luca's art, and he himself was originally a simple artisan, not some great master's pupil. He witnessed the progress of Ghiberti's doors and bronze statues, came in touch with Brunelleschi, and worked in Donatello's close proximity. Thus his decorations are to be found in places, where these masters had been working with their assistants: in the Pazzi Chapel,



Fig. 65. Madonna and Child,  
by Luca della Robbia. Bargello.

at Or San Michele (arms of the guilds), and S. Miniato (coffered ceiling in Michelozzo's chapel, 1448, and four medallions with Virtues in the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal).

Luca's personal and early developed talent made an art of the manufacture of clay figures in Tuscany. His leaning towards portraiture, strengthened by the example of Donatello, led him nearer to nature, and his sense of beauty invested his work with intimate grace, depth of feeling, and artistic composition; whilst Donatello's numerous works in this direction, most of which have not remained in Florence, show the richest invention and a clear grasp of all characteristic features. The best known result of their mutual work is the Florentine *Madonna relief*, round, or square, or lunette-shaped, according to the prescribed space. It furnished the example for the sculptors in marble down to Michelangelo, and for the painters down to Raphael. But what was of secondary importance to Donatello, was the chief problem of Luca's art. Technically there is a difference in so far as Donatello preferred the very low relief, whilst Luca was in favour of *mezzo* and high relief, though his sense of style saved him from yielding to the obvious temptation of imitating Ghiberti's pictorially receding planes. He advanced the old art of clay modelling by his greater refinement in colour, and by the invention of a weather-proof glaze, which raised these erstwhile modest creations of plastic art almost to the rank of the permanent and independent works in bronze or marble. The production of the Robbia ware was continued by Luca's nephew *Andrea* (d. 1528), the creator of the *innocenti* on the Foundling Hospital. Of Andrea's five sons, *Giovanni*, who was the most original, died about 1529. All the successive changes of style are followed in their works: Andrea is at times as sweet as Mino da Fiesole, then again crisp and hard like Verrocchio; his figures are white. Giovanni is fond of colours and produces borders of fruit and wreaths of many hues, but his figures are weak and insipid, or at the best morose and severe, to please the heart of his friend Savonarola. With the decline of style and technique, the works grow in size and quantity, so that finally Luca's subtle and personal art descends again to wholesale manufacture.

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In spite of continuous export, Florence has still an imposing stock of Della Robbia work. A splendid collection is to be seen in the first two rooms of the second floor at the *Bargello*. Luca is represented by choice pieces, large high reliefs on blue ground, some of which are encircled by delicious coloured wreaths. In one the Virgin is shown with the Child in her lap, laughing and with an apple in His hand (28); in another she is seated before a green wall, from which the Child picks a flower (31; fig. 65). Both are charming, but with the touch of dignity, which always raises Luca's Madonnas above the playful character of a genre picture. Again she is seen in adoration, as in Filippo Lippi's tempera panels (21), or pressing to her bosom the Child Whose hand is raised in blessing, and flanked by two adoring angels (29), an early lunette from the demolished church of S. Pierino on the Mercato Vecchio. A similar lunette, of about the same period is on a house in Via dell' Agnolo (No. 93). In such creations the master rises above the workshop, and reveals his own personality, worthy of the company of Ghiberti and Donatello.

And now we come to the painter Masaccio (1401—28). This early matured youth entered this world of great artists like a heaven-sent miracle. If one tries to forget all art after Masaccio and searches for the link that connects him with the past, one is taken back a century, to Giotto, and anyone who has eyes to see need not be explained the width of the chasm that



Fig. 66. The Raising of the King's Son, by Masaccio and Filippino Lippi. Carmine.

divides these two masters. Masaccio can only be studied in the Carmelite church across the Arno, where his principal work is to be found, and whether the populace of Florence flocked to see it, as they did twenty years later to Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise, and another fifty years later to Leonardo's and Michelangelo's cartoons for the Great Hall of the Palazzo Vecchio. In the small, semi-dark Brancacci chapel, saved from the conflagration which destroyed

the church in 1771, Masaccio first painted about 1425, together with his master Masolino, some scenes from the life of St. Peter, and two narrow frescoes represent independently the Fall of Adam and Eve and the Expulsion from Paradise. Masaccio died over the work, the lower half of which was finished much later by Filippino Lippi.

Vasari is full of admiration for these pictures of real life, the perspective and foreshortening and the "tactile values". The figures stand and walk on their feet, they look at us and touch our hearts. Vasari is right: Masaccio is the first modern painter. His trees are real growths of nature, and his houses not mere stage-scenery, but actual habitations of men. If we try to feel all this through the veil of deterioration, neglect, and so-called restoration, we are overcome by deep respect and sadness. How long will it be, before nothing is left but dust and dirt!



Fig. 67. St. Peter baptizing, by Masaccio. Carmine.

The story depicted on the fresco of the Tribute Money could not have been told more clearly, though the tax-gatherer figures on it twice, and St. Peter three times. The straight lines of the simple composition are full of spontaneous beauty, and the landscape background helps to produce an effect of depth undreamt of by Giotto. Most effective too are the smaller frescoes of St. Peter baptizing, healing the sick, and distributing alms. Note the clear, beautiful composition of the Baptism, the relative positions of the actors and spectators, and the treatment of the drapery which is no longer

conventionally arranged, but suggests the whole figure (fig. 67). The outline has become less important and is replaced by modelling in light and shade. Masaccio did not learn this from his master, the timid, amiable Masolino, who followed the Renaissance movement only superficially, in costumes and architectural forms, but from the inventor of perspective drawing, Brunelleschi, and from the sculptor Donatello, whom he wished to emulate in painting. Before sculpture had attacked the life-size free statue, Masaccio painted nude figures, such as the neophytes, or the Adam and Eve of the Expulsion, which impressed even Michelangelo and Raphael. Like Donatello he portrays his contemporaries in some of the figures. Unfortunately a fresco with a whole procession of well known people of his time exists no longer. It marked the beginning of a whole succession of Florentine frescoes depicting assemblies of citizens as spectators.

Vasari credits Masolino with the Preaching of Peter and the Healing of the Cripple, which in fact have certain points in common with this master's authenticated frescoes at Castiglione d'Olona; and modern criticism has added to these the Fall of Adam and Eve, because the models for these figures are not the same as those for the Expulsion. But this would mean that the real Masolino must have fallen off in an inexplicable manner in his later works, which are far below the Brancacci frescoes as regards animation, expression, and composition. The Raising of Tabitha and Healing of the Cripple, with the two young nobles in Lombard costume, which connect the two parts of the picture, are certainly beyond Masolino's capacity. We rather find here the beginner Masaccio following the manner of his master. We do not know why he left the series uncompleted; all we know is, that he died in Rome, apparently in miserable circumstances.

*Filippino Lippi* deserves the highest praise for his completion of Masaccio's work. It is not known, why it had remained in abeyance for over fifty years, or how Filippino came to be entrusted with its completion. Part of the Raising of the King's Son, and perhaps the entire design of this fresco, are Masaccio's (fig. 66). Ghirlandajo's pupil Francesco Granacci was the model for the nude boy. The other three pictures are entirely the work of Filippino. The large composition in two parts is less impressive, but clear and impassive;



Fig. 68. The Angel delivering St. Peter, by Filippino Lippi. Carmine.

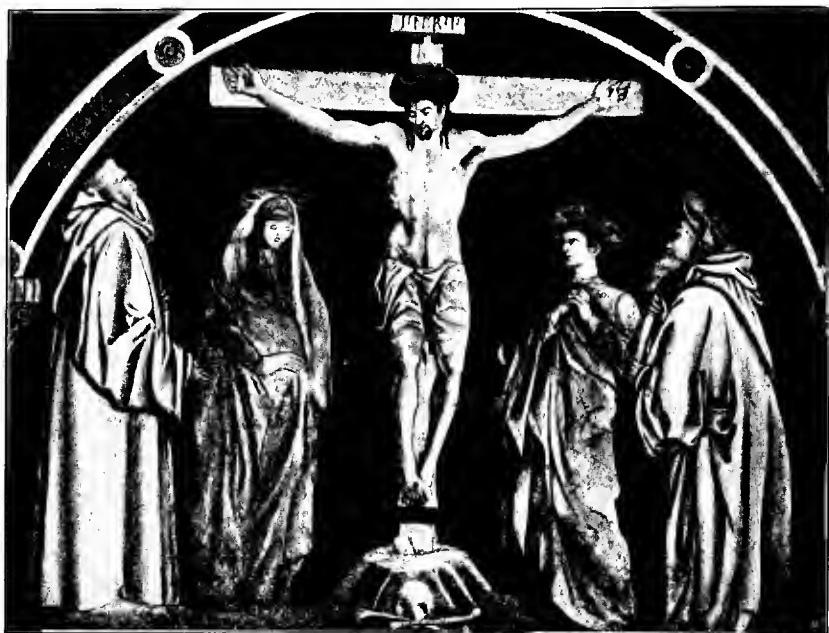


Fig. 69. Crucifixion, by Andrea del Castagno. Uffizi.

the single figures of the two narrow paintings rival Masaccio's in seriousness and dignity. The more modern painter can easily be detected in the finished accessories and in the slick, liquid brushwork.

Another two religious paintings by *Masaccio* can be seen in Florence: a fresco of the Holy Trinity in S. Maria Novella (near central door), Christ on the Cross between Mary and St. John in a Renaissance niche with a coffered

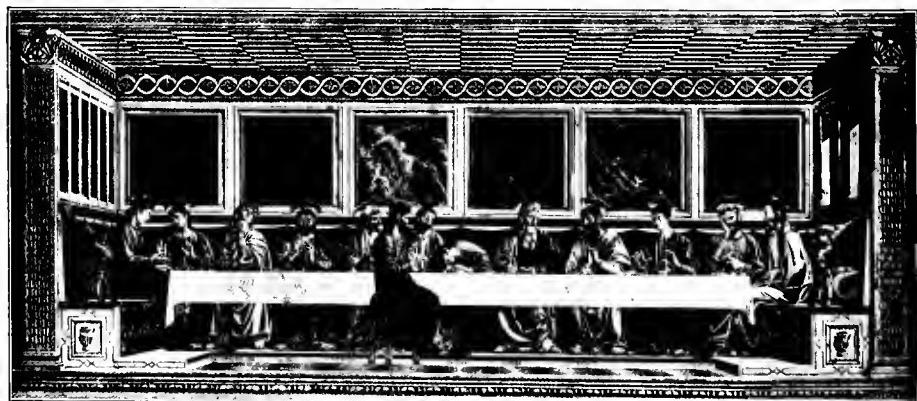


Fig. 70. Last Supper, by Andrea del Castagno. S. Apollonia.

barrel vault, outside which two donors are kneeling. A fine work of his best period, but in a bad state of preservation. Then an early altarpiece in tempera, from S. Ambrogio, now at the Academy, with the Virgin in the lap of St. Anne, cool and correct, and quite in keeping with this subject which has but rarely been successfully treated.

Though Masaccio's influence was to become enormous, he had strictly speaking no pupil during his short life, and the seed sown by him only bore fruit in the frescoes of Filippo Lippi and Ghirlandajo. His intentions were shown in a one-sided way by two older masters who survived him by many years: *Andrea del Castagno* (1390—1457) and *Paolo Uccello* (1397—1475). The former was above all preoccupied with anatomy which he treated in sculpturesque manner, with an athlete's pleasure in muscles and sinews. His bony hands and heads speak of an age which could not realize spiritual importance without an impression of physical strength. In the Uffizi can be seen an early fresco by Andrea del Castagno, a lunette from S. Maria Nuova, representing the Crucified Saviour between Mary and St. John and two Camaldolese monks. All except Mary turn towards Christ, so that they appear to surround the cross in a semicircle (fig. 69). In the Museum of S. Apollonia is a work of his full maturity, after 1450, the Last Supper. The powerful life of the Apostles gesticulating over the table is such, as if the actions were borrowed from Donatello, whilst the disposition of the legs under the table is not altogether successful. The well preserved colours are most effective in their strength (fig. 70). Most remarkable, however, are the nine single figures in fresco, which once formed the wall decoration of a Villa Strozzi in Legnaja. They belong to Castagno's early period and represent ideal and real portraits

Florence.



Fig. 71. Filippo Scolari, by Andrea del Castagno.  
S. Apollonia.

of men and women, standing in tabernacle-like frames, or stepping with one foot over the door-sill (*Farinata degli Uberti*; fig. 7), or stretching forth their hand (*Dante*; fig. 15), or attracting attention by assuming a grand air (*Pippo Spano*; fig. 71). Castagno delights in foreshortenings, as may be noticed in his Holy Trinity in the Annunziata. He always seems to have before his eyes the image of a statue which he wishes to transpose to a flat surface. *Uccello* was originally a goldsmith and helped Ghiberti on his Baptistry doors. Subsequently his more important fellow-workers esteemed and admired him for his paintings of single figures and for his love of difficult perspective, but he

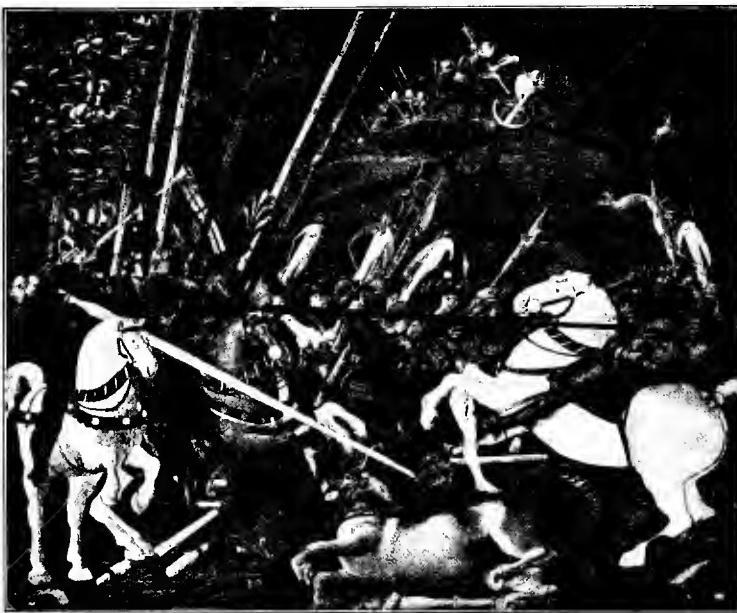


Fig. 72. Battle Scene, by Paolo Uccello. Uffizi No. 29.

does not appear to have attached much importance to colour. A battle-piece at the Uffizi (fig. 72, one of a set of tempera pictures) delights us by its decorative design and naiveté which suggests a child's wooden figures placed in battle-array. But his faded frescoes in green monochrome, with scenes from the Old Testament, in the Chiostro Verde of S. Maria Novella, were a considerable achievement for the time in which they were painted (1446). To him are due not only the Great Flood, and Noah's Sacrifice and Intoxication in the fourth arch, but also parts of the earlier scenes, f. i. the other Flood. Compared with the Giottesques who always fall back into the conventional, there is an unmistakable and important advance towards nature.

To these draughtsman-painters, who are so characteristic of the direction of the early Florentine Renaissance, must now be added a colourist of con-

siderable repute—Domenico Veneziano, who was probably born in Venice about 1400, and died in Florence in 1461. His judgment was held in esteem, and his name has in many accounts been connected with technical innovations, which came to light from the obscurity of tradition in many parts of Italy. In 1439 he was summoned to Perugia, where the famous Umbrian open air painter Piero dei Franceschi became his pupil. Andrea del Castagno is said to have extracted from him the secret of oil-painting, and to have killed him afterwards, to get rid of his rival. As a matter of fact the murderer died four years before his supposed victim. In Florence has been preserved one of Domenico's altarpieces (fig. 73, from S. Lucia dei Magnoli in the Via dei Bardi), a Madonna enthroned, with two Saints on either side and an architectural background of three arches. The expression is curiously severe, and the colours light and brilliant and reminiscent of Piero dei Franceschi. But the picture is much restored, and is altogether unworthy of the great reputation of its creator.



Fig. 73. Madonna and Saints, by Domenico Veneziano. Uffizi No. 1305.

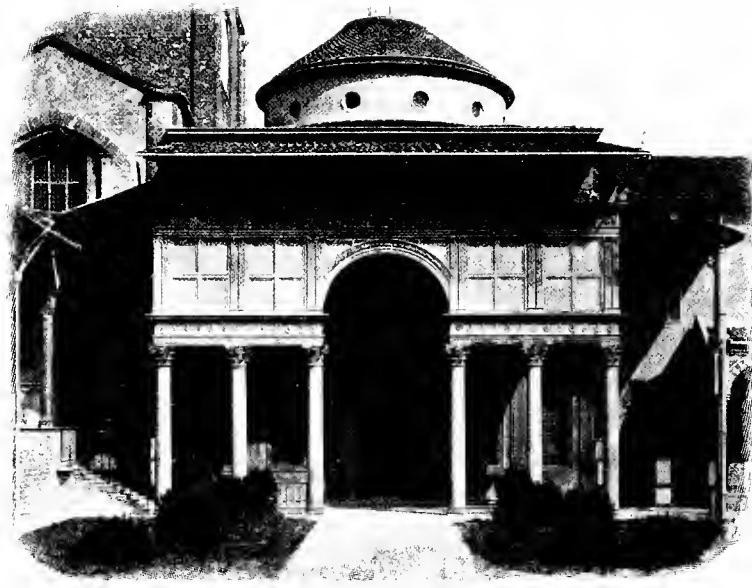


Fig. 74. Pazzi Chapel, Vestibule.

## XI. CHURCHES OF THE RENAISSANCE.

BRUNELLESCHI: CAPPELLA DEI PAZZI, S. LORENZO AND S. SPIRITO.  
S. FRANCESCO AL MONTE (CRONACA). THE ANNUNZIATA. ALBERTI:  
RUCELLAI CHAPEL AND FAÇADE OF STA. MARIA NOVELLA.

THREE works by Brunelleschi determine the direction of the Renaissance. The *Cappella dei Pazzi* in the cloisters of S. Croce was commenced in 1430; the building was completed in 1442, the decoration in 1469. This dainty building, with its wonderful proportions and carefully planned details is the purest expression of his intentions. The portico leads into a square room under the cupola, with barrel-vaulted additions to the left and right, so that the whole interior has a rectangular shape. At the back, facing the entrance, is another small, square, domed room for the altar (fig. 75). The inner face of the large cupola is semi-globular, whilst on the outside a flattened tiled dome rests on a low cylindrical drum with twelve small circular openings for windows. In the centre the cupola is surmounted by a very small temple-like superstructure.

Along the entire width of the building is an atrium in the form of a waggon-vaulted arcade supported by six columns (fig. 74). The straight line

of the cornice is broken in the centre by a semi-circular arch, and the vaulted ceiling by a small dome. Under the projecting raftered roof which is supported by short columns (a later addition), is an attic faced with marble slabs between pairs of pilasters, which appear here for the first time in Renaissance art. The wall of the atrium is broken by narrow, round-arched windows, and pilasters correspond with the Corinthian columns of the loggia. The architectural forms are classic throughout, and used so severely, that they make us forget that the middle ages have had their own architecture. The lines of the decoration are clear, and so simple, that they almost remind us of the soberness of the Empire style. Brunelleschi's more calculating than poetical mind found its most congenial expression in the pronounced reasonableness of classic architectural motifs. Brunelleschi's younger friend and pupil—as such at least he appears in the Pazzi Chapel—Luca della Robbia has added colour to the simple effect of this building. The four round reliefs of the Evangelists on the spandrels under the cupola, are one of his earliest larger works, and date back to the thirties. They are strong and gay in colour, and almost Byzantine in seriousness of expression. The twelve Apostles, white on blue ground, on the walls are the work of his nephew Andrea. There is no doubt that the interior decoration originally had far more colour, or that such was at least the intention. The glazed coffered ceiling of the atrium has still the full, original effect. Where Brunelleschi built, Donatello is generally not absent as decorator. To him is ascribed the marble frieze with the charming, animated cherubs' heads, but the execution is throughout that of his pupil Desiderio da Settignano.

Brunelleschi commenced his work on S. Lorenzo previous to the cupola of the Duomo and the Pazzi Chapel, but the execution of this building extended far beyond his death, and deviated considerably from his intentions, which can only be recognized in the general disposition and in isolated parts. The church, which had been built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century was originally consecrated to



Fig. 75. Pazzi Chapel, Looking towards the Altar.

St. Ambrose. Eight families, including the Medici, undertook to contribute towards an enlarged new building, which was decided upon in 1419, and Giovanni induced his friend Brunelleschi to undertake the work. He commenced the Old Sacristy on the South transept in 1421, and completed it in 1428. At the time of his death, in 1446, the transept was still unfinished, and the nave not yet commenced. His pupil Manetti undertook the continuation of the work. A year after Manetti's death, 1461, the high altar was consecrated. Cosimo de' Medici died three years later. He had paid 40000 florins for securing to his family the right of patronage, and had been the chief patron of the work, the completion of which he did not live to see. The church was never given a façade; designs for it by Michelangelo (made for Leo X. between 1516 and 20) remained unused.

We enter the Old Sacristy from the



Fig. 76. Old Sacristy of St. Lorenzo.  
Donatello's Bronze Door.

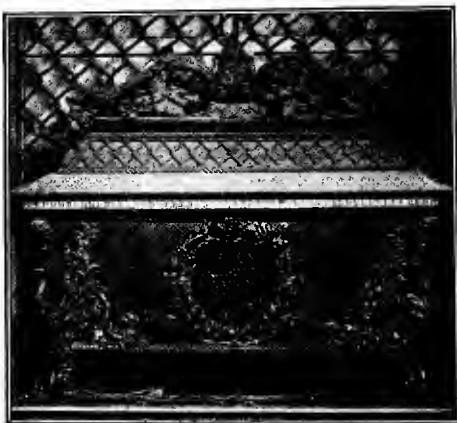


Fig. 77. Old Sacristy of St. Lorenzo.  
Medici Sarcophagus, by Verrocchio.

transept. On a square plan the umbrella-shaped cupola is supported by four semi-circular walls connected by spandrels; a noble, harmonious interior, which has unfortunately been white-washed. The wall decoration is richer than in the Pazzi Chapel. Donatello added the entire interior decoration: the medallions with stories from the life of St. John the Baptist in the spandrels, and the Evangelists in the lunettes, all executed in modest stucco, and formerly coloured, though now white-washed; above each of the back doors two Saints on coloured ground, likewise in

stucco. Donatello is also responsible for the simple, severely arranged bronze door with five square compartments on each wing and two Saints in very low relief on each panel (fig. 76), and for the terra-cotta bust of St. Laurence. Under the table in the centre, in a simple marble sarcophagus (not by Donatello, but perhaps by Buggiano, the creator of the Madonna relief on the altar, about 1430) are the remains of the founder of the Sacristy, Giovanni de' Medici, and of his wife. Their son Cosimo was buried in 1464 in the church in front of the choir; Verrocchio's inscription on the bronze plate—*pater patriæ*—was destroyed during the rising of 1494, and subsequently

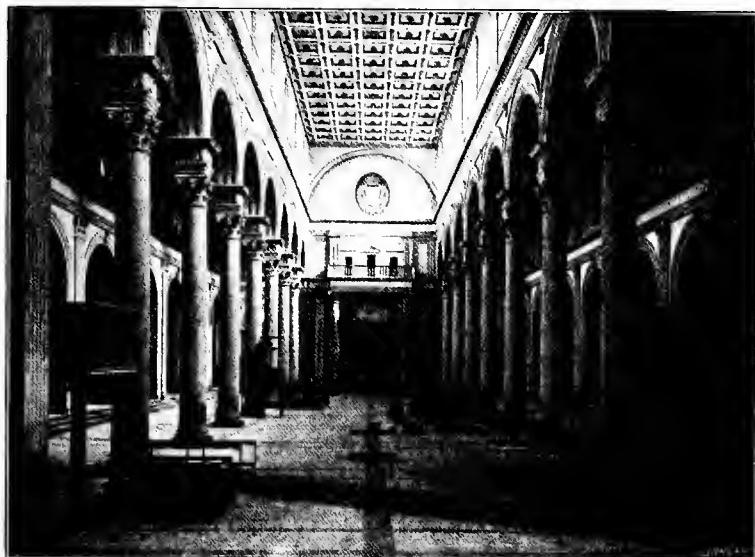


Fig. 78. S. Lorenzo, Looking towards the Entrance.

replaced. Donatello died two years after Cosimo, and was buried in the same vault as his patron. Soon after, in 1472, the Magnifico made Verrocchio erect a tomb for his father Piero (d. 1469) and his uncle Giovanni (d. 1463), which stands now in a niche of the Old Sacristy: a red porphyry sarcophagus on a marble socle, with wonderful bronze-work, claw-feet, acanthus leaves, and an interlaced railing at the back, all purely ornamental, without any figure decoration (fig. 77). It is the genuine work of a goldsmith-sculptor, thorough in execution, and forming a striking contrast, in its grand simplicity, to the showy marble tombs, which at that time had already made their appearance in the churches of Florence. It was originally in the neighbouring chapel of the Madonna di S. Zenobi. Lorenzo himself and Giuliano were placed in the same sarcophagus and only at a much later date transferred to Michelangelo's chapel.

In the plan of the church Brunelleschi followed the form of the ancient

Christian basilica (fig. 78). Arches on fourteen corinthian columns and two pillars divide the nave from the aisles which open into rows of low chapels. The two aisles have groined vaulting, whilst a flat, coffered ceiling rests on the cleristory walls. The cross of the church is crowned by an excessively slender cupola without drum (by Manetti who did not quite follow Brunelleschi's idea). The choir and transepts terminate in straight lines. Marble slabs cover the floor, and ugly whitewash the walls. The dimensions are too small to produce an imposing effect, but the interior has a soothing beauty which only rises to a certain degree of grandeur under the fine arcades of



Fig. 79. S. Lorenzo, Relief from the Pulpit.

the nave. The shafts of the columns are not fluted—and this is quite in accordance with the tendency of the Renaissance—but the effect of the capitals, imposts, and arcades is almost rich. As regards the decoration, Brunelleschi preferred to employ classic motifs, stylistic ornaments like those used by Donatello, and not leaves and wreaths of fruit, like Ghiberti's, or anything that belongs to the present day. All this, by the way, was finished after Brunelleschi's death, and his intentions were probably not closely followed. Fortunately the church does not contain much that might suffer from the prevailing lack of light. The singing gallery in the left aisle, which is similar to the one in the Cathedral but has no sculptures, was ordered from Donatello by Cosimo. Two square bronze pulpits on marble columns at the end of the nave, with animated, turbulent Scenes from the Passion in very sketchy relief, late works of Donatello's bottega, are in complete darkness; the one on the South-side is more

finished (fig. 79). An "Annunciation" by Filippo Lippi is hung in the worst possible light (left transept, Cappella Martelli).

To the left of the church are the two-storied cloisters, which enclose a lawn with trees and shrubs. The architect is not known, but was certainly not Brunelleschi. To the West of the cloisters is a late Renaissance building, the Laurenziana, which was erected after Michelangelo's plans for Clement VII., since 1523. Michelangelo himself executed the vestibule with its peculiar leading motif of coupled columns in niches; and Vasari, after the older master's design, the staircase leading to the vestibule.



Fig. 80. S. Lorenzo, Staircase of the Library.

On the opposite side, joining the North transept, is the *New Sacristy*, built by Michelangelo (1520—24) for Cardinal Giulio (Clement VII.) as burial vault of the Medici family, to correspond in form with Brunelleschi's Old Sacristy. We shall have to return to this chapel later. The pretentious *Cappella dei Principi* with its rich marbles and mosaics and overowering cupola was finally joined to the North side (since 1604). Thus S. Lorenzo is walled-in on the left and on the choir side. The simple facing, which can be seen on the right, expresses the construction of the interior. The façade remains in bare brick-work (fig. 12).

The Church of S. *Spirito* (fig. 81), the exterior of which has been left in the rough state, has a campanile by Baccio d'Agnolo (now restored); the late cloisters have no notable features. The plan resembles that of S. Lorenzo, but



Fig. 81. S. Spirito, Looking towards the Choir.

death the unimportant cupola over the cross marked its completion (1482). As in S. Lorenzo the smooth columns have an architrave above the corinthian capitals, but the arcades lack the decorative incrustedation, and the whole interior looks a little bare, notwithstanding its grand proportions and width, the richness of the bronze and marble choir screen, and its wealth in sculptures and altarpieces.

The ideas expressed by Brunelleschi in his Old Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, were taken up at S. Spirito by one of his successors, perhaps Giuliano da Sangallo, in the graceful octagonal structure which joins the left nave (1489—92; fig. 82). The eight walls are horizontally divided as it were into two storeys and framed by corinthian pilasters and entablatures. Five of the arches of the lower part open into semicircular niches (one for the chief altar, four for chapels). Small square windows are let into the upper part of the walls, on which rests a fan-vault with round windows in the lunettes. Cronaca, who is responsible for the cupola (1496), together with the architect of the Sacristy, built a rectangular vestibule between the sacristy and the church (1493). It has a barrel-vault resting heavily on twelve slender columns. The capitals and the coffered ceiling of the vault are by Andrea Sansovino.

Cronaca, whose real name is Simone del Pollajuolo (1454—1508), is the last follower of Brunelleschi's direction in Florence. Whilst still in his youth he undertook the building of a small church which presents perfectly pure

S. Spirito is longer, wider (especially the transept) and higher. It has more light and a splendid effect of spaciousness. The nave has a flat ceiling, and the aisles are vaulted. The plan has the form of a Latin cross. The aisles and chapels are carried right round the choir and transepts, which terminate in straight lines. All this is in accordance with Brunelleschi's plans, after which the church was commenced in 1436 or soon after. The work proceeded slowly. Manetti took the building over in 1452, and twelve years after his

proportions achieved by the simplest means. *S. Francesco al Monte* (or *S. Salvatore*), on the way to *S. Miniato*, was intended to be a modest church for the Franciscans monks. It has no aisles, and the chapels open on both sides of the nave which is covered by a raftered roof. Simple pilasters divide the chapels and are repeated on the walls above, where Renaissance windows with alternating triangular and curved pediments correspond with the lower arcades. There is no further decoration, not even in the choir behind the triumphal arch. The exterior is equally unadorned between shrubs and cypresses —a peasants' cottage, as it were, among the churches, or as Michelangelo significantly called it "*la bella villanella*".

With all its modesty the little building produces a far more pleasing effect than a sumptuous, large church down below in the city, with which the names of many famous artists are linked. The *Santissima Annunziata* on the Square of the same name belongs to a 13<sup>th</sup> century Servite monastery which was restored in 1444 (fig. 83). The church was rebuilt in the Renaissance style by Michelozzo, an able, young companion of Brunelleschi and Donatello. He commenced as a very mediocre sculptor, and was subsequently employed on architectural decoration, tabernacles, chapels, and such like. On the other hand his fame has not been handed down to posterity by any important church entirely built by him. His work in the Annunziata suffered the fate of being completely covered and hidden by the flamboyant baroque art of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The dome rests immediately on the wall of the round choir. The wide arch at the altar-end of the nave is an invention of Alberti's, but was completed after this artist's death by the younger Manetti, in 1476. The whole church has been spoilt by plastic decoration and gaudy painting in the baroque taste. The flamboyant splendour of the interior is positively depressing, and the additions made by later generations have not helped to improve the effect. The most striking instance is the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Annunciation on the left. It was designed by Michelozzo in 1444 and executed with exaggerated sumptuousness by his assistant Portigiani. It has a coloured frieze



Fig. 82. Sacristy of S. Spirito.

and baroque canopy, and is completely overloaded with the silver and gold gifts of the Medici, and with modern garish decoration. In face of such orgies of bad taste one ceases to wonder at the failure of the treasures of the great past guarded in the churches to exercise a more potent influence upon the successors of the Renaissance, and one can understand, how it was that Italian industrial art could have sunk to its present low level. In the other chapels are a few interesting pictures, such as the St. Jerome with the Trinity by Andrea del Castagno in the third chapel on the left: neglected, badly lighted, and hidden under modern lumber, they are not worth careful inspection.



Fig. 83. SS. Annunziata, Looking towards the Choir.

After these disappointments we can the better enjoy the frescoes of the great colourist *Andrea del Sarto*, who represents in Florence the painting of the late Renaissance, and who with a few precursors and pupils has delightfully decorated the anterior court of this church, with life-size representations from the history of the great Servite Filippo Benizzi (on the left of the entrance), and from the life of Mary (to the right; Pontormo's "Visitation" is to be specially noticed). Five of the pictures on the left are by Andrea who was then (1510) 23 years of age. His free, and apparently accidental composition, his light, liquid brush and his beautiful tone appear even at this early period. Through the decay one can feel a truer colourist than, say Raphael who had recently gone to Rome and was at that time working at his *School of Athens*. On the other hand Andrea, it is true, lacked Raphael's application. The

"Nativity of Mary" on the opposite side (1514, with a portrait of the artist's wife among the visitors) presents to us the same incident, which had been depicted a quarter of a century before by Ghirlandajo in the choir of S. Maria Novella, but here it is more graceful, fluent and light, in a word, it is trans-



Fig. 84. The Nativity of Mary, by Andrea del Sarto. SS. Annunziata.

lated into the style of the late Renaissance (fig. 84). The "Arrival of the Magi" is not so well composed. In the foreground, on the right, he has depicted his friend Jacopo Sansovino whom he esteemed as sculptor and who had once made him a present of a magnificent nude figure. Finally there is Andrea's famous Madonna del Sacco (1525) above one of the doors in the cloisters (fig. 85). The composition of the three figures in the semicircular space is perfect.

St. Joseph, whose arm rests on a sack, is placed a little further back, so as to give increased importance to the figure and wide-spread garment of Mary.

With Brunelleschi and his successors we must link the name of *Leo Battista Alberti* who looked upon the world with the eyes of classic antiquity and wanted to force the architecture of his time into the forms of the past. Brunelleschi in his opinion did not go far enough. He had to do himself violence to place an arch immediately upon the capitals of the columns; wherever he could, he interposed at least an architrave. With comical earnestness he wanted to persuade his contemporaries, that a straight entablature was befitting the loggias of noble families, whilst arches were only good enough for the ordinary citizen. In Florence he has created no complete work, except the Palazzo Rucellai, an architectural bibelot, and the façade of a church.



Fig. 85. Madonna del Sacco, by Andrea del Sarto. SS. Annunziata.

Both the latter were executed towards the end of his life for the owner of the earlier Rucellai palace, Giovanni, Paolo's son; and both are clear expressions of his style.

The former family chapel in the now closed church of S. Pancrazio contains a narrow marble shrine of rectangular plan, with four corinthian pilasters at each side, and three at the back and front. Above the cornice is a heavy anthemion crown, and the whole is surmounted by a little round temple with four columns. The little chapel is an exact imitation of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

In designing the *façade* of *S. Maria Novella*, which was completed in 1470 by Alberti's foreman Bertini, the artist was tied to the Tuscan incrustation with black and white marble, and also to the beginnings of the Gothic casing, which were already on the lower storey of the building. The architectural articulation of the *façade* is based on Alberti's design. The porch is also

entirely in accordance with Alberti's intentions (fig. 86). The round arch rises from the architrave of the pilasters. A lunette is between the arch and the straight-lined framing of the door. On the upper storey should be noted the volutes which mask the projecting parts of the aisles. They are Alberti's invention and were copied for centuries by thoughtless imitators, even in cases where the reason which caused Alberti's adoption of this decorative device was absent. For the rest this façade is an independent piece of rich decoration, and does not tell us much of the interior construction that lies behind it. And this is as Alberti intended it to be.



Fig. 86. S. Maria Novella. Porch by Alberti.



Fig. 87. Foundling Hospital.

## XII. CLOISTERS AND ARCADES.

THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL. S. MARIA MADDALENA DE' PAZZI (PERUGINO). S. MARIA DEGLI ANGELI (LORENZO MONACO). S. MARCO (FRA ANGELICO).

WITH what exquisite grace Brunelleschi knew how to solve a simple task is shown by the *Foundling Hospital (Innocenti)* in the Piazza dell' Annunziata, a modest building with three inner courts and an arcade on the Piazza (fig. 87). On the ground floor slender Corinthian columns support wide arches, and the whole colonnade terminates at each end in pilasters which support the architrave. The peculiarly light and harmonious effect is enhanced by the open stairs leading to the arcade which is vaulted in ogives on brackets. The low upper storey has square windows with triangular pediments. The only other decoration are Andrea della Robbia's delicious coloured medallions in the spandrels between the arches: that most original series of babies in swaddling-clothes (*innocenti*), Andrea's happiest and most popular invention (fig. 88). The Foundling Hospital, an early work of Brunelleschi's, was commenced not later than 1420, but not completed until after his death, in 1451, with many changes, like those from which all his works had to suffer. Only the nine central arches are executed by him; the reliefs are supposed to have been done before 1463, but are possibly of a later date. The principal court is treated quite in accordance with the outer arcade.

It was only natural that this attractive example should have exercised some influence, first of all on Antonio da Sangallo, who erected a very similar arcade on the same Square, the only work of his that has been preserved in Florence, whilst his elder brother Giuliano, Lorenzo's *protégé*, can be encountered in many places. His are the now walled-up cloisters in front of *S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi* (1492 to 1505), a colonnade with straight entablature, broken by the arches of the principal entrances, similar to Brunelleschi's Pazzi chapel. Exceptionally the columns have jonic, and not corinthian capitals, faithfully copied by Giuliano from a by no means beautiful capital which had been found in Fiesole. In the former chapter-house of this monastery is a thrilling fresco by *Pietro Perugino*, which cannot fail to give an unexpectedly



Fig. 88. Medallions on the Foundling Hospital, by Andrea della Robbia.

high idea of his power of expression to any one who only knows this master's easel-pictures (fig. 89). In the centre, seen through the middle arch of a colonnade, is Magdalen kneeling before the Cross. Through the left arch we see SS. Mary and Bernhard, through the right SS. John and Benedict. The three principal figures are isolated and left alone, so to speak with their sorrow which is somehow reflected by the landscape. The serious colouring of the greenish grey mountains, the prevalence of purple and absence of blue, strike us as curiously modern. The uncertain, affected attitude of Mary and of St. John is a weakness which can be noticed in other works by this master. The tender Umbrian mood and the melancholy character of the landscape were new for the Florentines, and one can understand their appreciation of the master, who, at that time (1495), was profoundly moved by Savonarola's sermons, and treated his art with particular seriousness.

The *Loggia di S. Paolo* in the Piazza S. Maria Novella, by an unknown architect of the end of the century, is an imitation of the Foundling Hospital. Brunelleschi's traces lead us to yet another place, not far from the *Innocenti*. In the Via degli Alfani is the Camaldoiese monastery of *S. Maria degli Angeli*, founded in 1295, which once sheltered *Lorenzo Monaco*, the artist-monk whose miniatures and altarpieces were much in request in Tuscany. He might be called a minor Fra Angelico; he was less individual, a little older, and altogether Gothic, though he only died in 1425 and might well have experienced the first impulses of the Renaissance in painting. Comparing him with Fra

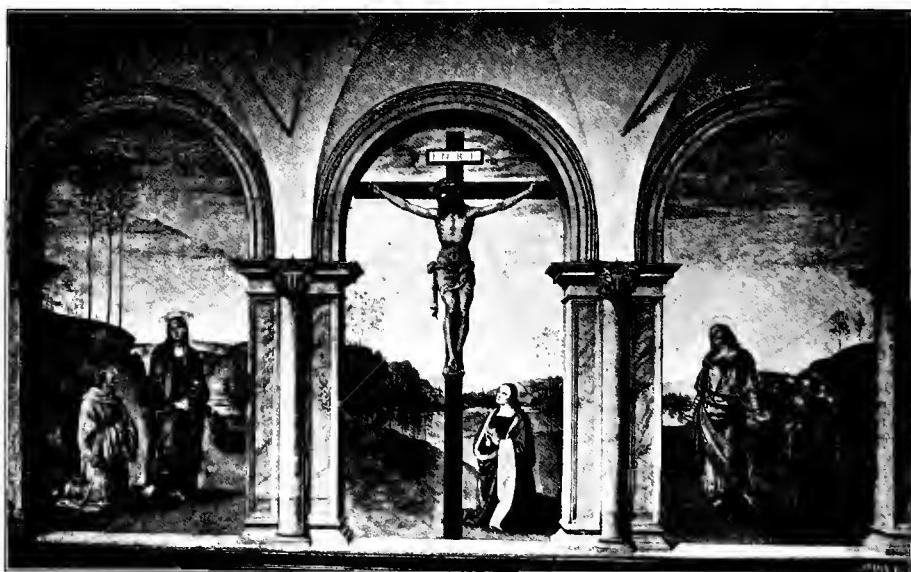


Fig. 89. Fresco by Perugino. S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi.

Angelico we feel how much of the new movement had been absorbed by the latter. Lorenzo follows Giotto only in externals, and remains a miniaturist even in his works on a large scale. Yet in some of his principal works he surprises us with solemn and sumptuous effects which one does not expect in anything connected with his modest name. One of these is the large altarpiece of 1413, with the Coronation of the Virgin in the centre, which has come to the Sala di Lorenzo Monaco at the Uffizi from the Badia of Cerreto (fig. 90). A year after Lorenzo died Filippo Scolari (1426), who had acquired wealth and fame in Hungary and had occupied the painter Masolino, and whom Andrea del Castagno immortalised in fresco not without a certain humour (pag. 97). Pippo Spano, as he was called by the Florentines, made a gift to S. Maria degli Angeli, which led to a work by Brunelleschi. Unfortunately his will was contested, and the money

mismanaged, so that the Oratory remained a mere ruin. Nevertheless the commission given to Brunelleschi is of particular interest, since it occupied him just at the time when he completed the cupola of the Cathedral (1434). In



Fig. 90. Coronation of the Virgin, by Lorenzo Monaco. Uffizi.

both cases the cupola was to rise from an octagon. The octagonal room was to have had eight high niches to serve as chapels, without any other architectural division.

The monastery of *S. Marco* was commenced about the same time by Michelozzo. Architecturally it is of no particular importance, but as nursery

of all the arts and of many serious and useful thoughts, and as centre of historical recollections it is unique and most stimulating. What is at present the spacious Square of S. Marco was once a rural district, with an old monastery of the Silvestrines among gardens and fields. Cosimo acquired it in 1434 after his return from exile, had it completely restored by Michelozzo, and gave it to the Dominicans from Fiesole. At its consecration in 1442 it was not yet entirely completed. S. Marco retained the favour of Cosimo's nephew Lorenzo until it was lost through Savonarola's insubordination. Long after the monk had suffered death by fire and the Medici had been driven from Florence, an



Fig. 91. S. Marco. Cloisters.

adherent of Savonarola's, Fra Bartolommeo, the first Florentine painter of the late Renaissance, retired within the walls of the monastery (1500).

The *Church of S. Marco* does not at present show much of Michelozzo's work. The choir and the tribune have been completely altered, and a new façade has been added in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The *monastery* was suppressed in 1867 and is now fitted up as the Museo di S. Marco. The spacious, unpretentious building contains on the upper floor the cells of the monks along narrow passages, and Michelozzo's Library with examples of the treasures collected by Cosimo. The architecture of the two cloisters is very simple. From the first a door leads to the chapter-house and Great Refectory, whilst another smaller refectory, with a fresco of the Last Supper, is entered from

the second court. The inscriptions and images from the demolished houses of the Florentine nobles, which are now let into the walls of this cloister, are well worth examining: they speak with eloquent voices of the great past. We are here on historical ground, before the traces of a civilization derived from that of classic Rome.

This monastery was the home of the lovable art of Fra Angelico (1387 to 1455). He entered the Order of the Dominicans of Fiesole in 1407, lived at S. Marco since 1436, and was called to Rome in 1446 by Pope Eugene IV.; he died in the Eternal City. Though contemporary with Donatello, his artistic ideas are still entirely Gothic. Only late in life did he absorb some of the



Fig. 92. Entombment, by Fra Angelico. Academy No. 246.

new artistic creed. He learnt from the frescoes of Giotto and his followers, especially Orcagna, but instead of animated action he depicts the serene side of life. His conception is lovely and intimate, and avoids sharp characterization. Soon after having taken his vows, he was led to Umbria in the service of his order, and his ten years' sojourn on the native soil of St. Francis was bound to leave its mark on his development. Much in his work is reminiscent of the contemplative, soulful art of the Franciscans. The whole expression is centred in the faces, whilst the action is not of much importance. The keynote is always struck by the faces of the women and angels, and even the youths and greybeards have this feminine trait. He fails in expressing virility. The bodies are scantily modelled, and the expression of limbs and forms is replaced by ample, flowing drapery resplendent in rich colours. As colourist Fra Angelico surpasses all the Giottesques with the luminous depth of his

tempera and with the range of his scale. In this respect he is a genuine master of the early Renaissance, and can compete with the best Florentines, even with his great pupil Filippo Lippi. Fra Giovanni is at his best in very small works; it would be difficult to find anything better of the kind, than the three exquisitely finished little tempera pictures of the Madonna delle Stelle (fig. 93), the Coronation of the Virgin, and the Adoration of the Magi, in cells 34 and 35 of the upper storey.

But even in fresco works on a larger scale he generally introduces but few figures, and always keeps the composition simple; he rarely strives after a grandeur, which is alien to his talent; he is true and sincere in his expression and indefatigable in his application, and never becomes mannered or mechanical. For these reasons his happy revival of an antiquated style has always passed as genuine art, and his own contemporaries, interested as they were in the new direction, held him in as high esteem as the great innovators of his period. His best frescoes at S. Marco are the pictures from the life of Mary and from the story of Christ on the walls of the cells. Their simple composition with few figures is unusually clear and surprisingly strong in expression. On the other hand the large "Crucifixion" with the many sorrowing saints, in the



Fig. 93. Madonna delle Stelle, by Fra Angelico.  
Academy No. 246.

chapter-house, is scarcely more than a well-meant pious work of the art-loving friar.

At the Academy is his large "Deposition" (No. 166), formerly in the Sacristy of S. Trinità, a famous masterpiece with brilliant colours and many beautiful details, but far from perfect as regards movements. Quite different is the effect of a fairly large "Entombment" (fig. 92) with its quiet attitudes and fresco-like broad masses of colour. A small triptych with the Last Judgement between Paradise and Hell, from the monastery degli Angeli, has always been admired for its fine execution and for its lovely angels and saints. The fame

of this work is better deserved, than that of the Deposition, though the same subject has been treated even more successfully in another picture. The Life of Christ in 35 scenes on eight panels (from the chapel of Piero de' Medici at the Annunziata) is not entirely his own work, but contains some important passages, such as the women at the tomb of the risen Christ. All these are at the Academy. At the Uffizi is, first of all, the mediaeval, stiff Madonna of the linen-drappers, with the famous music-making angels on the frame (17, Sala del Monaco), one of his few dated works, the commission for which he received, when he had nearly completed the fifth decade of his life. Compared with the pictures at the Academy, which actually belong to a later period, it looks almost like a work of his youth. The "Coronation of the Virgin", from the church of S. Maria Novella (1290, third Tuscan room), is the finest among his large easel pictures.

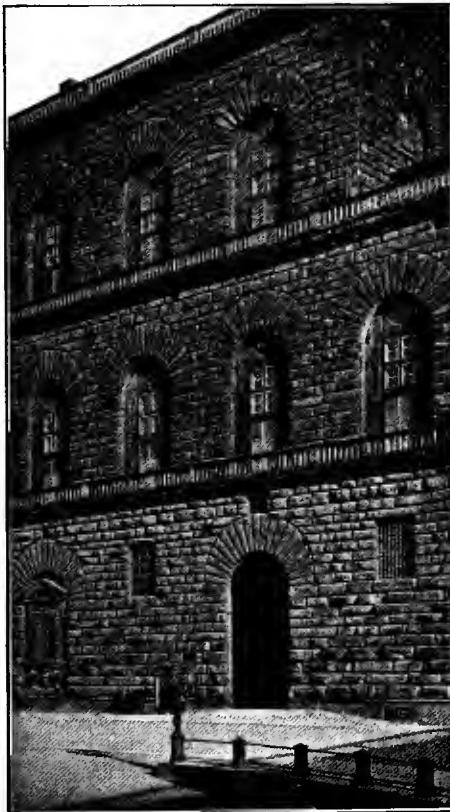


Fig. 94. Palazzo Pitti (portion), see fig. 11.

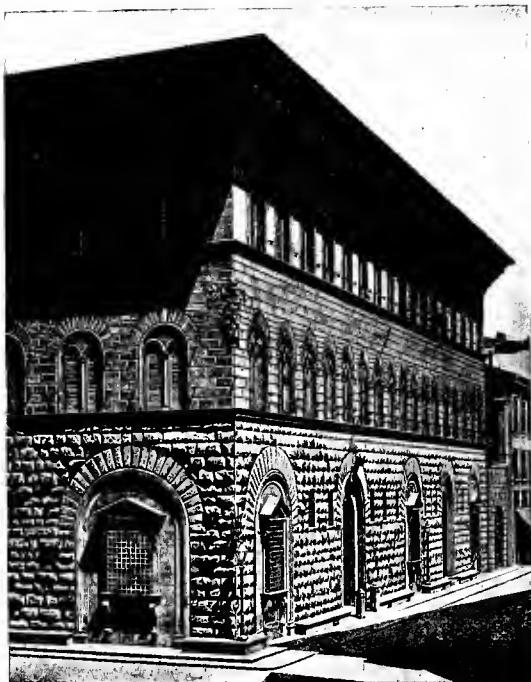


Fig. 95. Palazzo Riccardi.

### XIII. EARLY RENAISSANCE PALACES.

PARTE GUELFA. PITTI. PAZZI-QUARATESI. MEDICI-RICCARDI (BENOZZO GOZZOLI). RUCELLAI. STROZZI AND STROZZINO (STROZZI CHAPEL IN S. MARIA NOVELLA). GONDI, ANTINORI. GUADAGNI, SERRISTORI.

If the Northerner can only by slow degrees derive artistic enjoyment from the contemplation of a Renaissance church, the first sight of a Florentine Renaissance palace will immediately strike him as a pure source of beauty and appropriateness, with which he has long been familiar, though only from the dim reflection offered by the palatial dwellings of his native country, whilst here he has found the perfect prototype. If he has tried to find the essence of Renaissance architecture in classic forms, he will now see that these are unessential, sometimes quite in the background, sometimes scarcely existing. The architects of Florence, stimulated by the needs of their time, have found a new artistic expression. That the innovation is so simple, so natural and obvious, that one feels inclined to ask why it had not existed long before,

constitutes the greatness of their invention. The inside of the Gothic dwelling house was narrow and irregular, the exterior constructed with a view to resist assault, and provided with the fewest and smallest possible openings. The more luxurious race did not want spiral staircases and narrow passages, but large rooms, and as many as possible on one plane. From this results a spacious plan with few stories, two as a rule, besides the groundfloor. The broad façade is turned towards the street, whilst Gothic houses frequently had considerable depth and a very narrow front. The façade is simple and not over-decorated, and clearly articulated without any so-called grouping of the



Fig. 96. Court of the Palazzo Quaratesi.

parts. Its beauty is based on the proportions of wall and wall-opening, and sometimes on the imposing scale. The stories are generally of equal value. The groundfloor with the entrance from the street has only small, porthole-like, square windows, in addition to one or more portals. The two upper stories have arched windows, divided by columns or pilasters. Above is a cornice, or at times a raftered roof. In the masonry the Florentines followed the remains of Etruscan times and of some mediaeval buildings: the stones of the façade left in the rough, the broad-stone being only smoothed at the edges or joints. This method gave character to the exterior which is still reminiscent of the defiant private fortress of the street-fights and necessitates extreme reticence in decorative forms. If the exterior is proud and serious, the inner court with its colonnades is bright, light, beautiful and comfortable.

There was no room for gardens, but the wealthy merchant had his villa outside the town. The patricians of Florence were frequently consulted in building matters by foreign princes, and their architects were in great request abroad, so that gradually the Florentine style of the dwelling house conquered the whole North. To this day we have to thank the Florentine Renaissance for our town-houses. As early as 1480 Florence had over thirty of these palaces, to which many more were subsequently added. We will consider the most important among them chronologically.

The creator of the new type was Brunelleschi. He commenced early with a few smaller private houses which sometimes had only to be rebuilt. The house of the *Capitani di Parte Guelfa* (1418) in the Via delle Terme is the

only building of this early period, that has been preserved, at least as regards the plan, the large arched windows, and the framing by pilasters, which is here employed for the first time on a secular building. A spacious hall in the interior is also articulated by pilasters. The upper storey is not finished.

Negotiations with Cosimo de' Medici anent the new family palace, which was eventually built by Michelozzo, were abortive, because Brunelleschi's plans were too grand for his modest patron.

But he was entrusted much later with

the gigantic Palazzo *Pitti* (fig. 94), for which he designed the plans, though he did not live to see them executed by his foreman Luca Fancelli. In this building all details are suppressed, and the effect is entirely based on the proportions of the mighty *rustica* wall which might have been piled up by Cyclops. The second storey was not intended by Brunelleschi, but belongs to a much later period, but the addition has by no means prejudiced the effect of the whole. We have seen, how Luca Pitti fell in his struggle with the Medici, and how his palace remained unfinished (pag. 69). His grand-nephew sold it to Eleonora, wife of Cosimo I., who moved from the Palace of the Priors to the Pitti which remained henceforth the seat of the Lords of Tuscany. This explains the extensions. Fancelli's building had a width of seven windows with three arched portals on the groundfloor. Even then the façade of over 180 ft. in width was imposing, whilst in height it rivalled the nave of some important church. After 1620 one of the Parigi gave the second storey its



Fig. 97. Detail of Column in fig. 96.

present width of 13 windows and over 350 ft. But the groundfloor and first floor which now had 23 windows, were trebled in width (about 680 ft.). The projecting colonnades on both sides belong to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Above the cornices of the three stories run three long lines of balcony, with balustrades of Ionic columns. Brunelleschi only used Ionic capitals instead of Corinthian in unaccentuated parts. Portals and small windows alternate on the ground-floor, so that each corresponds with an arched window on the two upper stories. Ammanati afterwards interpolated windows with Renaissance pediments in most of the portals, and decorated the inner court, where the windows are divided by alternate half-columns with Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian capitals in



Fig. 98. Court of the Palazzo Riccardi.

the basement and on the first floor and second floor respectively. All this is a little course, but not out of harmony with the rest.

At the corner of Via del Proconsolo and Borgo degli Albizzi is the palace of the *Pazzi* (*Quaratesi* since 1760). Only the ground-floor is of rustic masonry; the casement of the windows is enriched with leaf-mouldings. The palace has a raftered roof and a richly decorated court which cannot possibly be by Brunelleschi. We know that Jacopo Pazzi, who lived in the palace until he was killed in 1478, employed the architect Giuliano da Majano, the elder brother of the sculptor. This should indicate the time and the artist of the building, for which Brunelleschi can at the most only have supplied a design which was scarcely followed beyond the ground-plan.

The palace of the *Medici*, commenced by Michelozzo not before 1444, has no value as regards invention. It follows the motif of the Pitti, but with

some alterations. The stories decrease in height from the ground-floor to the second floor, and the bold rustic masonry of the ground-floor is gradually toned down towards the top (fig. 95). The lower windows are of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The *Riccardi* bought the palace in 1659, and considerably extended the building towards the North (1715), disturbing thus its beautiful proportions. The effect of original plan can be seen from the court which is characteristic for Michelozzo—not imposing, but moderately solemn (fig. 98). The eight relief medallions

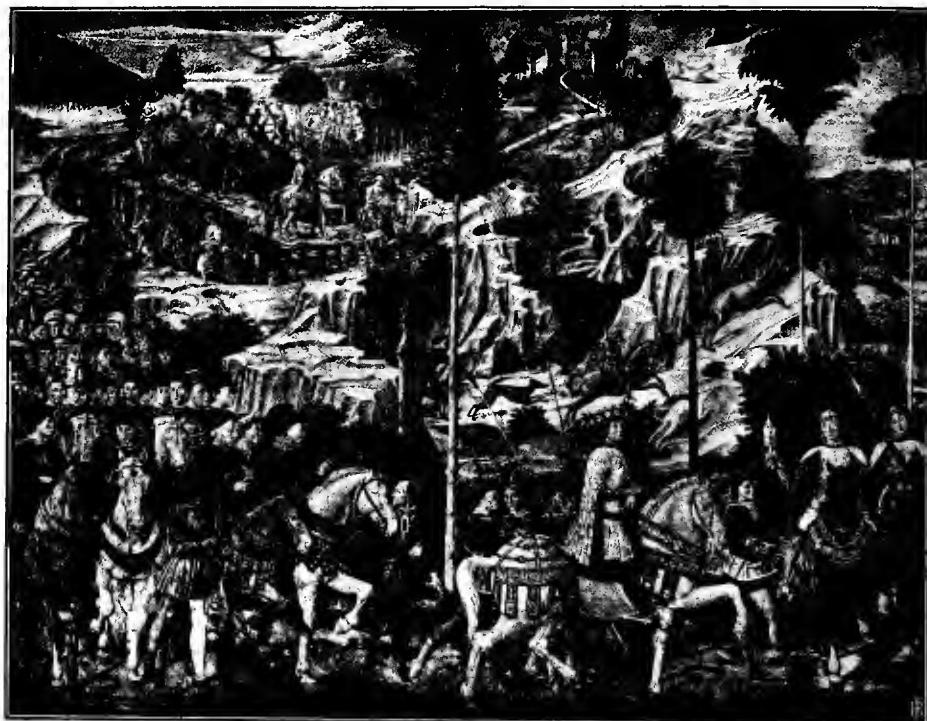


Fig. 99. The Journey of the Magi, by Benozzo Gozzoli. Pal. Riccardi.

in antique taste on the walls of the court are clumsy studio-works after late designs by Donatello.

The chapel breathes the joyous splendour of the frescoes painted by *Benozzo Gozzoli* (1420—98) during Cosimo's life-time. They represent the journey of the Magi to Bethlehem through a smiling, hilly Tuscan landscape: nobles on horseback, attendants with dogs and pages with hawks, peasants and shepherds, a ceaseless stream of gay, joyful life (fig. 99). Entrancing angels kneel in adoration (fig. 100), whilst others sing their hymn of praise in the air. These are notes from the heavenly concert of Fra Angelico, who was then no longer among the living. Benozzo had been his pupil and his assistant in Rome and

Orvieto. Now he translated his pious master's spiritual art into worldly language, into a decorative style—gay of heart and light of hand. Something of Fra Angelico still survives in the figures of the angels and in their round, curly heads. The superficial treatment of the forms of the body is another point which Benozzo has in common with his master, but he also has his Springlike freshness, and his lovely landscape with its green turf and plants and flowers.

New with him is the convincing reality of the numerous portraits which include the aged Cosimo, and the rich, elaborate costume of the period. Here he has followed a famous example: the sumptuous "Adoration of the



Fig. 100. Adoring Angels, by Benozzo Gozzoli. Pal. Riccardi.



Fig. 101. Adoration of the Magi, by Gentile da Fabriano. Academy.

"Magi" of the Umbrian Gentile da Fabriano, which ever since 1423 had been a much admired ornament of the Sacristy of S. Trinità. It is now one of the proudest possessions of the Academy (fig. 101).

The *Rucellai* palace introduces a new type (fig. 102). It is Alberti's earliest work in Florence, built for Giovanni Rucellai (pag. 110), Palla Strozzi's son-in-law. Giovanni had considerable political ambition which he had to restrain after Cosimo de' Medici's return from exile. Cosimo would not allow him any share

in the Government of the state, and Giovanni henceforth devoted himself entirely to his business and to the cult of the arts. The palace was built for him between 1446 and 1451 by an unknown architect after the plans of Alberti, who departed from the type which had prevailed before. He made the *rustica* less prominent, and added to the characteristic horizontal lines of the façade of the Florentine palaces a perpendicular articulation by means of pilasters on all the three stories. Above the cornice is an ornamental frieze, and above it another girth, on which rest the pilasters and windows. A beautifully moulded cornice crowns the second storey. This ingenious combination of a broadstone building with orders of pilasters has made a refined work of art of the Florentine *rustica-façade*. But it was ignored in Florence, where the architects continued to build in the old style. In Rome Alberti's innovation was generally accepted.



Fig. 102. Palazzo Rucellai (Portion).

prominent position of the Pitti; it is a citizen's house among other citizens' houses, but as such it surpasses all others, and it entailed an immense expenditure of time and money to make room for the *casa grande* in this narrow quarter and to secure for it a free position in the present Piazza Strozzi. The return to his native town in 1466 had not been an easy matter for Filippo, since hostility against the Medici was one of the traditions of his family. His father, like his cousin Palla and many others, had died in exile. Filippo had left Florence as a boy, with his two brothers, and had gone to Naples, where his uncle Niccolò lived as an exile, managing one of his five banking houses. Filippo became his uncle's heir in 1469, and enjoyed the possession of an

The Palazzo *Strozzi* is the noblest example of the older type. It has not the

enormous fortune, when, with great pomp and ceremony, he laid the foundation stone to his palace in 1489. But he had to be cautious, as Lorenzo de' Medici kept his eye on all the doings of the prominent citizens. He pretended to intend building shops on the ground-floor, as otherwise the house would be too costly, and when the Lord of the Republic expressed his regret and spoke against this plan, Filippo seemingly gave way and was now at liberty to surpass in splendour the house of the Medici.

The palace has a ground-floor with a porch and small square windows, and above it two stories of equal height, with the usual arched windows, nine towards the Piazza Strozzi, and the same number towards Via Tornabuoni, so that the building appears of considerable height to its width. The majestic effect is only obtained by the large, though beautiful, proportions, without further articulation or detail (fig. 103). Only one of the sides—the one in the Via Strozzi, with 13 windows, is completed. The building was only half finished about 1504, long after the death of Filippo, who in his will had imposed

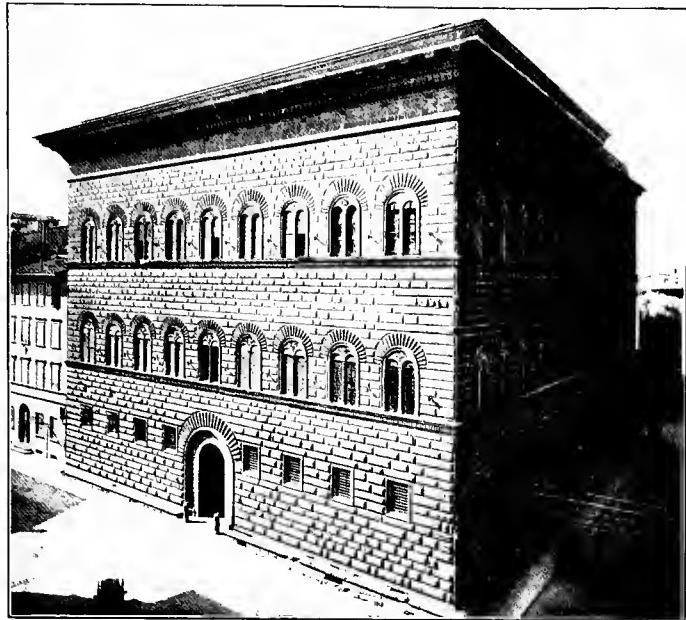


Fig. 103. Palazzo Strozzi.



Fig. 104. Court of the Palazzo Strozzi.



Fig. 105. Tomb of Filippo Strozzi, by Benedetto da Majano. S. Maria Novella.

the Medici Palace (fig. 104). In 1533 the younger Filippo Strozzi had at last fulfilled his father's will. As husband of Clarice Medici, a niece of Lorenzo the Magnifico, he gave much trouble to the Medici. He was at the head of the exiles, a man of undaunted courage and in every way vastly superior to Cosimo, the future Grand Duke. Filippo died in prison, after disgraceful treatment, soon after Cosimo's accession (1538), and under

upon his sons the duty of completing it. We know that Cronaca (d. 1508) was in charge of the building at that time. He designed the famous rich and heavy cornice from an antique fragment, but it was only partly completed. He also designed the plans for the court in three stories of similar disposition to Michelozzo's in

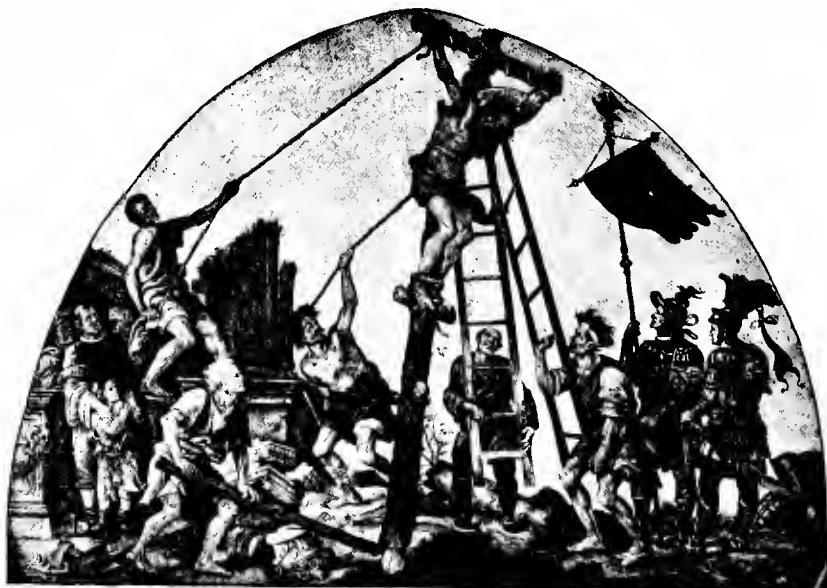


Fig. 106. Martyrdom of St. Phillip, by Filippino Lippi. S. Maria Novella.

mysterious circumstances. His line ceased with his children and was perpetuated by Lorenzo, his weak half-brother by his father's second marriage, who by permission of the Medici had taken possession of the paternal palace as early as 1533, and whose descendants own it to this day.

But who was the inventor of the façade? The records mention a model by Giuliano da Sangallo, whose art would have risen here considerably above that of his authenticated Palazzo Gondi. Vasari mentions the sculptor Benedetto da Majano—who is quite unknown in this capacity—perhaps only because the elder Filippo had, before his death in 1492, given him a commission for his tomb in S. Maria Novella. It is in the chapel to the right of the choir—not in the one with Orcagna's pictures in the left transept. Above the black sarcophagus is a round relief of the Madonna in a wreath of Cherubs, with four adoring angels with lovely heads, all in white marble on dark ground (fig. 105). The sides of this chapel are covered with frescoes by Filippino, depicting the miracles and the life of SS. John and Philip (the patron saints of the Strozzi). They are full of energetic movement, perhaps a little overloaded with classic accessories, and belong to the last, unrestrained manner of this gifted painter (fig. 106). Filippo had commissioned the work in 1487, and it was completed in 1502, not long before his death. Many art treasures were at one time stored up in the family palace, but have since been scattered. Outside, on the corners of the building, are still to be seen the famous lamps by Caparra, a metal worker who was in much request and difficult to deal with; not every palace was entitled to such *lumieri*. The key of the palace was sold by the Strozzi to Adolphe Rothschild for 30000 lire.

Nearly opposite this palace is the similar, small Palazzo *Strozzi*, whose architect is unknown (Giuliano da Majano?). The rustica ground-floor carries the principal storey with seven windows, and above the cornice is another storey which was added at a later date. The Palazzo Strozzi represents the Florence.

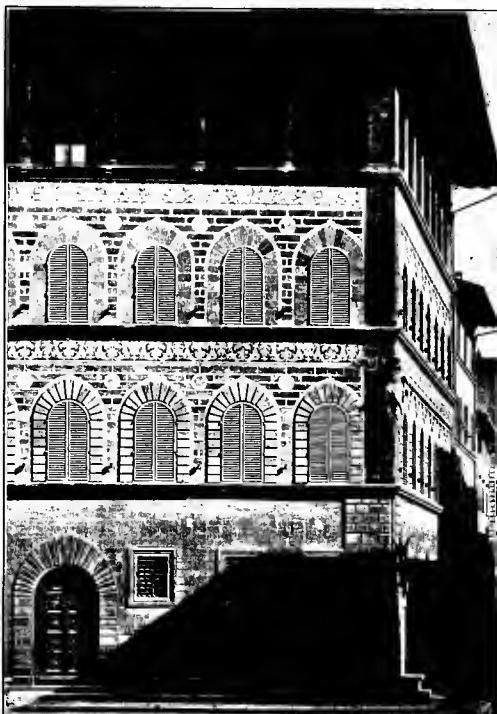


Fig. 107. Palazzo Guadagni.

last invention in this direction. Giuliano da Sangallo's Palazzo *Gondi* in the Piazza della Signoria (after 1494) is merely a monotonous repetition of the old motif of graduated rustica (very rough below, moderate in the centre, smooth above) with arched windows. The small Palazzo *Antinori* (3 Via Tornabuoni), probably by Giuliano da Sangallo, is better. Cronaca's *Guadagni* palace (about 1500), across the Arno, dispenses with the grandeur of the old rustic masonry, and is almost like a villa, pleasing and gay, and varied in colour (fig. 107). The three stories are surmounted by an open colonnade with jutting roof, which forms as it were a fourth storey. The corners of the three solid stories are more accentuated than the wall-filling, which is of smooth broad-stone on the ground-floor, and plastered and painted on the upper stories which, in addition, have a richly decorated frieze.

Finally we must mention a curious, dainty building of unknown origin, which was completed in the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century; the narrow Palazzo *Serristori* in the Piazza S. Croce. It has two slightly projecting upper stories, arches on the ground-floor, and pilasters with straight entablature (fig. 108). These pilasters flank on the second floor three square windows divided by columns, and on the first floor three arches above square openings. Alberti's Rucellai palace has evidently been the model for this building.



Fig. 108. Palazzo Serristori.



Fig. 109. Coronation of the Virgin, by Filippo Lippi. Academy.

#### XIV. THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF EARLY RENAISSANCE ARTISTS.

FILIPPO LIPPI. THE POLLAJUOLI AND VERROCCHIO (A. SANSOVINO). SANDRO BOTTICELLI, GHIRLANDAJO AND FILIPPINO LIPPI. LORENZO DI CREDI, COSIMO ROSSELLI AND PIER DI COSIMO. THE YOUNGER MARBLE SCULPTORS: TIEE ROSSELLINI, DESIDERIO, MINO, BENEDETTO DA MAJANO. THE PORTRAIT-BUST.

DONATELLO died barely two years after Cosimo's death (1464). Masaccio, Brunelleschi and Ghiberti were dead long since, Alberti had left Florence, and of the founders of the Renaissance only Luca della Robbia was left. At that time Florence had only one important painter: Filippo Lippi, Cosimo's younger contemporary, who flourished about 1450, and connects the younger generation of artists with the older. This younger race commences with the painter-sculptors Pollajuolo and Verrocchio, the successors of Donatello, who reached their zenith about 1470. Their influence extended not only to sculptors, but also to painters, especially to Sandro Botticelli and Ghirlandajo, both of whom were born before 1450, and many others. By the side of the versatile artists Pollajuolo and Verrocchio, who as sculptors showed preference for bronze, were a number of sculptors in marble, artistic descendants of Luca della Robbia. But these did not paint and had no appreciable influence on the painters whose ideas they sometimes translated into marble.



Fig. 110. Madonna, Tondo, by Filippo Lippi.  
Pal. Pitti No. 338.

They were principally occupied with large, decorative works, such as monumental tombs, tabernacles and pulpits, and their art finally degenerated into mere craftsmanship.

*Fra Filippo Lippi's* grandly conceived frescoes in the Cathedral of Prato reveal this artist as a worthy successor, almost as a compeer, of Masaccio. In Florence he is represented by a number of carefully finished easel pictures, most of which are now at the Academy. They have the same grand trait, the firm, quiet dignity of noble style, and, where the subject permits,

a tender gracefulness of expression. He loved women: they outweigh the male element in his pictures, and at times one would almost feel inclined to say that there is something feminine in his whole manner. Thus his loveliest invention is the delicate Virgin Mary kneeling in adoration before the Infant, not in a church, but in the solitude of the woods. By introducing St. Joseph, the shepherds and the singing Christmas angels, he transformed the whole scene into a representation of Christmas night. Two very similar pictures, now in the Academy, came from convents in the neighbourhood; they are early and just suitable for the devotion of contemplative monks. The tender feeling is derived from *Fra Angelico*, and they have but little of Masaccio's masculine vigour, though Filippo took from him a more realistic view of life. New for the period is the independent life of the landscape, and the poetry and fairy-like feeling, with which the whole scene is invested. A large altarpiece of 1441 from S. Ambrogio, likewise at the Academy, shows the Coronation of the Virgin by the Almighty in papal robes, attended by a crowd of saints, angels, and human witnesses. The painter himself in monk's attire kneels in the corner on the right (fig. 109). The angels carrying roses and lilies, the costly garments of the men and women, the veils and dainty coiffures, produce a sumptuous effect, in spite of the damaged colours. One cannot but be struck by the little diversity in expression, the often repeated type of these rustic choir-boys, and the worldly, kirmesse-like character of this Church festival: this is true, living reality.

We find the same angels carrying lilies at both sides of a standing Madonna on his earliest work of which the date can be fixed, an altarpiece from S. Spirito, commissioned in 1438, and now at the Louvre. The predella is at the Academy. As on his frescoes, Filippo tells his story gracefully and impressively in four scenes with but few figures. Among them is the rare representation of the angel Gabriel delivering his message of death to the Virgin (pag. 40). Finally the Academy has a Madonna with four Saints, an early work and particularly interesting, because it came from the Medici chapel in S. Croce. It is serious and severe, without a breath of light-heartedness; a promising work of a beginner who would not shirk any difficulties. The later *tondo* of the seated Madonna, in the Palazzo Pitti (fig. 110), is mainly important for the perspective distribution of the story in the background, in which appears for the first time a figure which was subsequently often repeated in Florentine painting: a waiting-maid carrying a basket on her head. Yet another Madonna (Uffizi; fig. 111) is notable for the sculpturesque modelling of the figures. Mary is seen in profile with her hands folded in prayer and with drooping eyelids, whilst two roguish boy-angels raise the Infant towards her. The foremost of the angels is turning his face to smile upon the spectator; his wings and the Madonna's arm overlap the frame, a device afterwards frequently used by Mantegna, who derived it from Donatello, whom Filippo had constantly before his eyes. This picture, every detail of which is characteristic of his style, has almost the effect of a work of sculpture, so that it makes Filippo appear as a continuator of Donatello and Luca della Robbia. He, in his turn, influenced his successors with the type of his Madonna and with that "Virgin in Adoration".

With all Filippo's dignified and fresh conception of nature, Masaccio had surpassed him in spiritual energy and soulful expression. These traits only reappear in Botticelli and Filippino. Furthermore we miss in Filippo the modelling of the bodies; his men and women dressed in long garments stand and walk appropriately, but he has never produced a nude figure. Here the painter-sculptors *Pollajuolo* and *Verrocchio* step in.

Unlike Masaccio and his followers, the painters proper, these two artists have painted no frescoes, but only easel-pictures of smaller dimensions, with



Fig. 111. Madonna and Angels,  
by Filippo Lippi. Uffizi No. 1307.



Fig. 112. Hercules and Antaeus,  
by Ant. del Pollajuolo.  
Uffizi No. 1153.

more careful treatment of the details, especially of the human forms—a beneficial reaction against the superficiality which might have resulted from the mere painting of pictures, and actually did result in artists of otherwise great reputation: Masolino, Fra Angelico, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Cosimo Rosselli. Furthermore both are in the first place sculptors, and painters only thanks to their technical versatility. Both are linked to the later development of Donatello, without having been his pupils, and both are goldsmiths by training, well versed in all the manipulations of bronze-work from the casting to the chasing. This accumulated knowledge of art and its influence on their successors in painting and sculpture, are of more importance than such of their works as have come down to us. Pollajuolo's works in particular are not as enjoyable for the art-lover, as they are interesting for the connoisseur.

*Antonio del Pollaiuolo* (1429—98) has a much younger brother, *Piero* (1443—96), likewise a goldsmith by training, but only active as a painter of not much individual talent, who closely follows his brother. The two work together and are first mentioned in 1460. The actual painting of their none too numerous pictures is generally Piero's, the invention Antonio's. The drawing is on the whole strong, the modelling harsh and uncompromising, with clear outlines—



Fig. 113. Terra-cotta bust, by Ant. del Pollaiuolo.  
Bargello No. 161.

Fig. 114. Terra-cotta bust, by Verrocchio (?).  
Bargello No. 165.

a rendering of form suggested apparently by sculpture and metal-work. The actions and attitudes of the figures are impressive, and the colours rich and glowing. Both brothers were no longer entirely satisfied with tempera, but experimented with varnish and oil-colours. Antonio's superiority appears in the only picture from his hand, which has been preserved in Florence: Hercules and Antæus (fig. 112) and Hercules and the Hydra (Uffizi). Everything is true and serious, the structure of the bones, the surface of the bodies, the strained muscles, the grip, the entire animal life. It is both pictorial and sculpturesque. The same group of Hercules and Antæus has been treated by him in a small bronze (Bargello, first floor, room 6). In the Bargello (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room 4) is also his boldly modelled terra-cotta bust of a young warrior (fig. 113). The other bust, which has for no reason been called Piero de' Medici, is probably by Verrocchio (fig. 114). Antonio's large works in sculpture—the bronze tombs of Popes Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII.—are in Rome, where he spent his last years. In Florence are some remains of embroidered vestments, for which he had furnished the designs—27 small stories from the life of St. John the Baptist (Opera del Duomo, No. 110). Every piece is worth noting. Part of these stories had been treated

in fresco fifteen years before by Filippo Lippi at Prato, and twenty years after him Ghirlandajo painted some of them at S. Maria Novella, f. i. the incident with Zachariah, but Antonio surpasses both in the heightened life of his small figures, which, it is true, would not have been suitable for the scale of wall-decoration. But Antonio's actions and attitudes will be found soon after 1480 in the small figures in the backgrounds of fresco painters and others, in the works of the Umbrian painters who came in touch with the Florentines (Perugino, Pinturicchio), and in those of Signorelli, Sandro and Filippino. Pollajuolo himself only came to Rome some considerable time after the Florentine-Umbrian painters whom Sixtus IV. had summoned to Rome to decorate his chapel. A fine work of his, of the year 1480, is at the Cathedral Museum. It is the relief with the Birth of St. John the Baptist, on the massive silver altar from the Baptistry (fig. 115); the "Decollation" is by



Fig. 115. Birth of the Baptist, by Ant. del Pollajuolo. Cathedral Museum.

Verrocchio. It is in such small pieces that his power of working out the details until they appear invested with the breath of life, becomes most striking.

Piero's feebler manner, his superficial, affected naturalism, need not be traced through his pictures. The "Prudence" seated on a throne, at the Uffizi (No. 1306), and five similar Christian Virtues which have recently been added to the collection, are thoroughly tedious and should only be noted for the serious treatment of the drapery. His best work in Florence is the altarpiece from the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal in S. Miniato (Uffizi 1301)—three life-size male saints, strong in drawing and enamel-like in colour; finished about 1470. Presumably it was painted under the eyes of his greater brother, who may have helped with his advice.



Fig. 116. Putto, by Verrocchio.  
Court of the Palazzo Vecchio.



Fig. 117. David, by Verrocchio.  
Bargello.

*Andrea del Verrocchio* (1435—88), the elder Pollajuolo's junior, is more versatile and more influential as head of a school, and a finer artist both as regards design and ideas. As head of the most productive *bottega* that has probably ever existed, he dominates the second half of the Quattrocento, as Donatello had dominated the first. With a strength and severity, which almost amount to harshness, he combines a feeling for pure beauty which was alien to Pollajuolo's art. In every sphere of art, which he enters, he produces new and valuable works: nude and draped figures, men and women, Madonnas and putti; as sculptor he works in clay and bronze and marble; as painter he

extends in every direction the methods of expression and participates in the experiments of his pupils in the use of any new medium. All this he did in the ten years or so before 1485, when he went to Venice to crown his life-work with the equestrian monument to Colleoni.

Having finished for Lorenzo de' Medici the sarcophagus which is now in the old Sacristy (1472, pag. 103), he made for the same patron two original and characteristic bronze-statues. On a fountain in the court of the Palazzo Vecchio is a graceful winged boy, holding in his arms a dolphin and balancing himself on one leg (fig. 116). The Boy David with the head of Goliath by his feet (1476, Bargello, fig. 117) clearly shows the difference between Verrocchio and Donatello whose David of 40 years earlier can be seen at the same museum. The meagre body with the slender limbs and angularities of the transitory age, large feet and awkward attitude, is in full tension. Nothing is slurred over, and all is almost painfully exact. Donatello never attempted such thoroughness in the modelling of the limbs and of the surface of the body. The graceful elegance of the silhouette and of the whole expression, with the girlish smile as chief accent,



Fig. 118. Relief from the Tornabuoni Tomb, by Verrocchio. Bargello.



Fig. 119. The St. Thomas Niche, Or San Michele, with Verrocchio's statues.



Fig. 120. The Baptism of Christ, by Andrea Sansovino. Baptistry.



Fig. 121. The Baptism of Christ, by Verrocchio. Academy.

almost anticipates Leonardo, who became Verrocchio's pupil. Of not much later date is the tomb of Giovanni Tornabuoni's wife, who died in childbirth in 1477; a high relief in marble, executed by a pupil, is at the Bargello (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room 4, fig. 118). We now trace our steps back to *Or San Michele*, where the central niche of the principal façade was still unoccupied (fig. 119). It was originally intended to hold Donatello's "St. Louis" (now in S. Croce), and was ready for it in 1425. Michelozzo was then Donatello's assistant, and to-day both claim the honour for the invention of this niche; but the plastic decoration is undoubtedly due to Donatello. The architectural forms are approximately those which we have found in Brunelleschi's buildings, and all we can say about them is that their excellence favours the theory of Donatello's authorship. Soon after Donatello's death we find Verrocchio at work on the "Christ and St. Thomas" group, which he only finished in 1483. It is the oldest and the finest free-standing group of the early Renaissance. Thomas has stepped out of the niche and is on lower ground; Christ as the principal figure fully faces the spectator. The eyes and minds of both are centred on the exposed wound and the two hands near it are so eagerly occupied, that the movement of Christ's right arm is

almost lost. This realism is characteristic of the early Renaissance. A later artist would have been more formal and solemn and would have treated the garments more as homogeneous masses, whilst Verrocchio treats them with due regard to the play of light on the excellently chased bronze.\*<sup>\*)</sup> Verrocchio could not express himself less realistically than in these figures which are already flushed with the beauty of the late Renaissance.

Compare with this group the cruel clearness of the famous "Baptism of Christ" at the Academy, his only authenticated picture (fig. 121). There is certainly no intrinsic beauty in the two principal figures, but nobody had yet painted life-size figures approaching these in truth to nature, and the nude, which since Masaccio's Adam and Eve had been left to the sculptors, appears again for the first time in this Christ of Verrocchio's, with the sculptor's stronger conception of form and sureness of delineation. We shall find it again in the figures of St. Sebastian and of Venus by his contemporaries Pollajuolo, Botticelli, Lorenzo di Credi, and others. Every detail, even the palm tree, is literally true to life without even a reflection of poetry, down to the corner on the left, where two angels are kneeling with their garments gathered up in their arms. One of these angels, who is more spiritual than his rustic comrade with his broad hands, is painted by young Leonardo who worked in Verrocchio's studio till 1472. Perhaps his share in the work is even larger than this, but we leave this question to others. Nor is it possible definitely to fix the date



Fig. 122. Madonna Relief, by Verrocchio. Academy.



Fig. 123. Madonna of the Magnificat, by Botticelli. Uffizi.

<sup>\*)</sup> Compare this group with Andrea Sansovino's "Baptism of Christ" above the East porch of the Baptistry (fig. 120).

of this remarkable work. Leonardo was twenty years of age in 1472, and after 1477 he can hardly be imagined as assistant. Verrocchio must surely have painted more pictures than this Baptism. The most important of the few that are ascribed to him is the „Tobias and the Angels” at the Academy. The grandly conceived figures have the same distinctly plastic character, and all the details of the costumes and landscape are most carefully finished. But there is over the whole a certain friendly solemnity, a pleasant feeling which is rare with Donatello and entirely alien to Pollajuolo, and which softens the harshness produced by Verrocchio’s severe execution. Verrocchio is particularly



Fig. 124. Adoration of the Magi, by Botticelli. Uffizi No. 1286.

happy in treating the forms of *putti*, which do not lend themselves to the dry style of Antonio Pollajuolo. Luca della Robbia, who has chiselled so many beautiful angels and saintly children, is too serious and perhaps too religious for the thoroughly worldly *putto*, this invention of late Greek art, the world of children revelling in unrestrained joy of life and health, which so delights Donatello. Some of Donatello’s bubbling wealth of invention in this direction was inherited by his pupil Desiderio.—Next to Donatello and Luca, Verrocchio has done most towards developing the Florentine Madonna type in sculpture. Here again his influence on such painters as Leonardo, Botticelli and Lorenzo di Credi is more important than his reliefs in marble and clay, though these comprise some exquisite pieces. The best of them in Florence is the large terra-cotta relief of the Madonna and Child from S. Maria Nuova, now at the

Uffizi (fig. 122). At one time it was painted in colours. A similar relief in marble is at the Bargello (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room 5, No. 180).

Among the painters of Florence *Sandro Botticelli* (1446—1510) was the first after Filippo Lippi's death. With unlimited fancy he treated every subject, discovering at the same time new methods of expression. Masaccio and Filippo had mainly treated religious subjects, and Sandro first followed Filippo's lead, but his Madonnas and Saints were soon given a different temperament: they no longer had Filippo's phlegm and only rarely his general expression of pleasantness; they think and dream with melancholy seriousness. But where he paints some biblical story or worldly scene, and particularly where he revels in mythologic and allegoric invention, his pictures become as full of life and animation as a relief by Donatello or Pollajuolo; the emotions rise from the soul to the faces and are expressed in strong movement—a restlessness in which the spectator participates, and which constitutes one of the charms of the works. But one feels at the same time, that this is his real element, the most important aim of his art, to which in case of need he sacrifices everything else, and therein lies his weakness: his effervescent phantasy hurries past the severe school of form in trying to find the most direct way of expression.

A brilliant designer, full of invention and character, his drawing is nevertheless scarcely "correct" in the accepted meaning of the word. The clear, hard outline suggests his goldsmith training, and his vision is not really pictorial, like Masaccio's. Nor is he a colourist like Filippo, in spite of his fine tempera. He learnt most from the sculptor Verrocchio, and was also influenced by the exaggerated anatomy of Antonio Pollajuolo, but he no more attempted to make the objects appear plastic and round, than he tried to make the space recede in his pictures, and he was never interested in the landscape behind his figures. The background is to him no more than a coloured wall which reflects some



Fig. 125. Adoration of the Magi, by Ghirlandajo.  
Uffizi No. 1295.

impressions, and the whole picture is treated in flat masses. In spite of these imperfections he impressed his contemporaries and has now become the pet of a public that would not think any less of him, if one were to say that he was really no painter, but a draughtsman and illuminator. The more wonderful, the greater—they would say—is his art!



Fig. 126. Adoration of the Magi, by Ghirlandajo. Foundling Hospital.

Lionardo's senior by six years, he attains to mastery at the time when the "Baptism" leaves Verrocchio's bottega. The breath of life of Leonardo's angel can be felt in many of Sandro's pictures. The frescoes of the Sistine Chapel (1481—2) show Botticelli at his zenith. In Florence we can only know him by his easel pictures, of which the earliest is the Madonna of the Magnificat (Uffizi, fig. 123), a real circular composition, not a mere glimpse through a window. But notwithstanding the beautiful linear arrangement, the problem is not quite satisfactorily solved, since the two angels at the extreme ends are most awkwardly placed. These pensive, gentle, girlish angels are his own and his finest invention, very different from Filippo's peasant lads who just

fulfil their duty without sympathy or interest. The execution in thin tempera is wonderfully neat, more drawn than painted, with hard outlines and rich gold ornamentation. The equally careful and much later "Adoration of the Magi" (fig. 124) with the portraits of Cosimo, Giovanni and Giuliano de' Medici, depicts a popular scene which, in Lorenzo's very early days, had been presented to the people of Florence in a public pageant so splendid and gorgeous, that for months to come it remained almost the sole topic of conversation. Perhaps it was originally intended for a private chapel of the Medici, though in Vasari's time it was in S. Maria Novella. At any rate it has not the severity of a church picture, which would have been little to Botticelli's taste at that period of his life. The expression is fine and full of life without any exaggeration,



Fig. 127. The Calumny of Apelles, by Botticelli. Uffizi.

the composition novel and significant: it follows the pyramidal form and prepares us for Leonardo's later, unfinished "Adoration" (Uffizi, Tribuna). Between these two, as regards time, are two entirely different versions of the same subject by Ghirlandajo: a tondo of 1487, with splendid architecture (Uffizi, fig. 125)\*), and a square altarpiece, before 1488 (Foundling Hospital, fig. 126), in which he allowed his brothers to collaborate with him. Sandro's picture is earlier and distinctly more interesting than Ghirlandajo's. It bears traces of Leonardo's influence and was certainly not painted before Verrocchio's "Baptism", and probably not before 1478, the date of Giuliano's assassination. Curiously enough Lorenzo does not figure among the Medici portrayed in this picture.—Another picture in the Uffizi, the Calumny of Apelles, after Lucian, probably

\*) A replica, with landscape instead of architectural background is at the Pitti, 358.

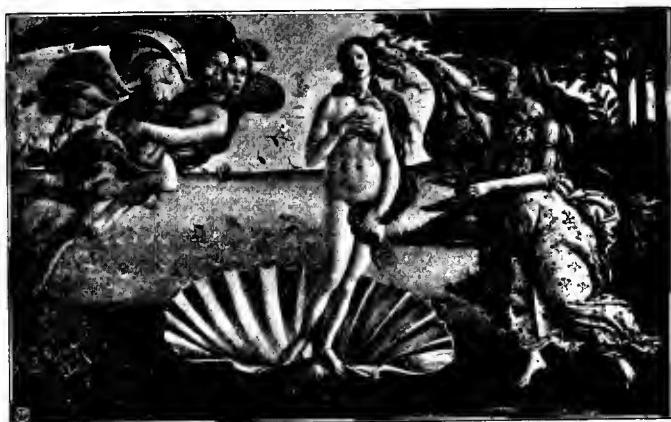


Fig. 128. Birth of Venus, by Botticelli. Uffizi No. 39.

point of caricature. The "Birth of Venus" (fig. 128) was painted for the Medici Villa di Castello. The subject is taken from the Homeric Hymns and was probably suggested by Poliziano, but is treated in an entirely independent spirit. The nude goddess, standing on a shell in the attitude of the Venus de Medici, floats across the sea, blown towards the shore by two Zephyrs and received by one of the Horae, a slender figure in swinging, dance-like movement. More famous still is the large Spring picture at the Academy (fig. 129). We know now, that the subject is taken from Ovid's *Fasti*, and may suppose that Poliziano's Giostra gave the artist the first impulse. In a laurel and orange grove can be seen Venus, in whose honour the garden-fête is celebrated. To the left are three Graces or Hours commencing a graceful, formal dance; further still is Mercury with uplifted hand which may be raised to pick some fruit off the bough.



Fig. 129. Spring, by Botticelli. Academy.

a cassone panel, was painted by Botticelli for a friend. The narrative is followed quite closely, and the setting of the scene is, contrary to Botticelli's custom, a rich and beautifully constructed architectural background. The attitudes and expressions are exaggerated almost to the point of caricature. The "Birth of Venus" (fig. 128) was painted for the Medici Villa di Castello. The subject is taken from the Homeric Hymns and was probably suggested by Poliziano, but is treated in an entirely independent spirit. The nude goddess, standing on a shell in the attitude of the Venus de Medici, floats across the sea, blown towards the shore by two Zephyrs and received by one of the Horae, a slender figure in swinging, dance-like movement. More famous still is the large Spring picture at the Academy (fig. 129). We know now, that the subject is taken from Ovid's *Fasti*, and may suppose that Poliziano's Giostra gave the artist the first impulse. In a laurel and orange grove can be seen Venus, in whose honour the garden-fête is celebrated. To the left are three Graces or Hours commencing a graceful, formal dance; further still is Mercury with uplifted hand which may be raised to pick some fruit off the bough. From the right the goddess of Spring in her floral garment approaches in dancing movement, and behind her Zephyrus tries to catch Chloris, from whose mouth flowers are growing. The curious ideal of beauty expressed in these undeveloped, artificially lengthened figures in transparent

veils is far removed from the healthy reality of Masaccio and even of Filippo Lippi. We can understand Savonarola's pious wrath, even though we are thankful that this entrancing vision with its decadent charms was not consumed by the flames, to which he had committed so many "vanities". Sandro, we hasten to admit, is not always decadent—only in this particular type of picture. The Allegory of Spring was probably painted before 1480, as the treatment of the surface of the bodies shows the influence of Pollajuolo. The colour is again neutral; only the costumes of Venus, Mercury and Flora stand out in stronger colours from the prevailing light grey. The pictorial treatment is flat and decorative, and the linear composition insists on the vertical direction.

Botticelli's temperament was never gay, in spite of his worldly imagination. Late in life he actually repented himself of his sinful art and became a faithful adherent of Savonarola. He painted some serious and very beautiful pictures and illustrated Dante's Divine Comedy, but the best and most interesting of these late works have not remained in Florence. His art was still much in request, and he had many imitators and some pupils, but no vital school.

Contemporary with Sandro, though a few years younger, is *Domenico Ghirlandajo* (1449—94), a serene and clear artist's nature, without much depth, but of cheerful spirit. Though he is not a sculptor, his figures are firm and plastically rounded. Like an inventive architect he creates beautiful buildings of independent value: façades, arcades and interiors, with decorative ornaments and painted reliefs and statues. The relation of his figures to the space in which they are placed is always correct. Though he is a good colourist, he does not investigate the deeper problems of colour, like Leonardo, or even Perugino, and for this reason he is less concerned with the easel picture than with the fresco on a grand scale, to which he devotes himself passionately. It was said, that he would have liked best to paint all the walls of Florence. He had been a goldsmith and had learned painting from Alessio Baldovinetti. Then he joined Verrocchio's circle, Sandro and Leonardo, whose influence can

Florence.



Fig. 130. Adoration of the Shepherds,  
by Hugo van der Goes. Uffizi.

be traced in his expression, movement and certain types; but he always remains himself, conscious of his aims and limitations, an indefatigable worker to his early end.

As successor of the great fresco-painters, especially of Giotto and Masaccio, we find him in Florence in two places. In the chapel of Francesco Sassetti at S. Trinità he painted, on the altar wall the donor and his wife, and on three walls six scenes from the life of St. Francis of Assisi, clear, impressive and dignified, and terminating with the touching funeral of the Saint. The altarpiece of the "Adoration of the Shepherds" (1485, now at the Academy) is of the same time, equally grand and serious, and excels the later Adorations



Fig. 131. Madonna and Saints, by Ghirlandajo.  
Uffizi No. 1297.

fig. 131, and Academy, 66). The predella of the Academy picture is the work of an assistant.

Finally the full splendour of this sympathetic artist is revealed in the choir of S. Maria Novella. On the altar wall, below a "Coronation of the Virgin" and other biblical and legendary scenes, can be seen the donor Giovanni Tornabuoni and his long deceased wife Francesca Pitti, whose tomb had been created by Verrocchio. The side walls show on the left the Life of Mary and on the right the story of the Baptist, each in seven sections (fig. 132). The most striking feature of these frescoes, compared with those of the older masters, is the modernising of the Biblical stories by the introduction of numerous portraits of the donors' family and friends, which aroused Savonarola's wrath. They are no longer mere spectators, but take part in the action, these stately men and slender, beautiful women in their costly attire, a little stiff

of the Magi in the realistic painting of the coarse heads. He had been impressed by a Northern realist, Hugo van der Goes, who ten years earlier had painted in Bruges a brilliant, large triptych ordered by Tommaso Portinari for the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova; it is now at the Uffizi (fig. 130). The luminous depth of the Flemish picture could, of course, not be matched by Ghirlandajo's dull tempera. Two admirably accomplished altarpieces by Ghirlandajo, "Conversations" of similar arrangement, date from the next few years, about 1487 (Uffizi);

perhaps, but as graceful and well mannered, as the chronicles of the time have described the patrician ladies at the reception of foreign ambassadors or Princes. It was admitted, that nowhere else could be seen women as noble and cultured, as in Florence. Every scene in Ghirlandajo's frescoes is remarkable for the



Fig. 132. From Ghirlandajo's Frescoes at S. Maria Novella.  
Scenes from the Life of St. John the Baptist.

composition, and for the placing of the figures in their right relations to the surroundings. No restlessness, as with Sandro; no crowding, as with Filippo; spaces are left for light and air and produce an effect of pleasant repose. The architecture is as important, as later with Raphael: façades of palaces, wide, spacious arcades, and furnished dwelling-rooms in turn, and everything

has the merit of independent invention. Ghirlandajo had every reason to be proud of the work, which was finished in 1490.

Of Masaccio's four independent successors Filippino Lippi, the son of Filippo and of Lucrezia Buti (1458—1504), is the most talented. He is more energetic and more versatile than his three predecessors, but cannot in his artistic achievements be ranked with them: He has neither Filippo's quiet grace, nor Sandro's feeling, nor Ghirlandajo's calm majesty. Rich in invention and



Fig. 133. Adoration of the Magi, by Filippino Lippi. Uffizi No. 1257.

capable of the clearest characterization in drawing, he spoils his best works by carelessness and waywardness. He was only ten, when his father died, and received his first education from Fra Diamante, and afterwards from Botticelli. His earliest easel picture, the Vision of St. Bernard at the Badia (fig. 3), combines the most beautiful qualities of Filippo and Sandro, and his continuation of Masaccio's Brancacci frescoes (pag. 95) is worthy of his great predecessor. Grand and solemn again is a Madonna enthroned with four Saints, of 1485 (Uffizi, 1268), painted for the hall of the Otto di Pratica in the Palazzo Vecchio. Very different is his art ten years later. The Adoration of the Magi (Uffizi, fig. 133) is an effective picture, rich in incident and with many life-like

portraits. But the motiveless animation of the personages is distracting, the composition is loose, and there is no connection between the figures, architecture and landscape. His frescoes in S. Maria Novella (pag. 129) mark a further step in this direction. In these his exaggerated realism seeks for models in the street. Similar coarse types appear in the executioners in his last picture, the Descent from the Cross (Academy 98), the lower portion of which was painted after his death, in 1505, by Perugino.

Whilst Filippino had a few successors in the painting of easel pictures, Ghirlandajo left a completely organised bottega with assistants and pupils, his brothers Davide and Benedetto, who are only artisans, his somewhat more individual brother-in-law Mainardi, and the able Francesco Granacci. With Domenico's son Ridolfo this school passes into the late Renaissance. Their works need not detain us, but a few words must be devoted to some of the minor quattrocentists, who occupy a higher position among the Florentine painters. Verrocchio's pupil *Lorenzo di Credi* (1459—1537) has only painted pleasing easel pictures, mostly small in size, and always calm and conventional: Madonnas with angels or saints, the Virgin of the Annunciation, or the Mother in Adoration.

His drawing is delicate, clear and sure, his colour tolerably good, but not important, his expression gentle and graceful, and distantly reminiscent of his fellow-pupil Leonardo. Only once he attempts a large work with many figures, the "Birth of Christ" (Academy; fig. 134). It has all the good qualities of his small pictures, but lacks cohesion. His modest talent has no dramatic bent.—The opposite extreme to this careful miniaturist is the coarse and in his day highly esteemed *Cosimo Rosselli* (1439—1507) who has inherited all the faults of his master Benozzo Gozzoli, but none of his good points. He is a soulless artisan, and is moreover clumsy in technique. His few easily recognizable types are repeated again and again in his easel pictures, of which many are preserved in Florence, besides a large fresco which is



Fig. 134. Birth of Christ, by Lorenzo di Credi.  
Academy No. 94.

considered his best work. It is in the church of S. Ambrogio and represents a procession in the costume of the period (1486). It has recently been thoroughly restored.—His greatest merit is, that he was the teacher of as able an artist as *Piero di Cosimo* (1462—1521), a painter of great versatility, who produced not only devotional, but mythological and other illustrative pictures, like Sandro whom he surpasses in colour. He might almost be called a colourist, at least from the Florentine point of view, and in this he follows Leonardo and the Lombards, whilst Filippino influences him as a characterist. His well drawn figures are seriously and nobly conceived and have left an impression even on the far more important painters of the early cinquecento, on Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto and their circle, to whom he also handed down the solid technique of the past century. His best pictures have however gone abroad.

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The younger marble sculptors derive their artistic descent partly from Donatello, partly from Luca della Robbia. Their tendency is chiefly decorative, and their invention is not revealed in new ideas and in free statues, but in the architectural forms which they use, not with the subtlety of their masters, but more pretentiously and sumptuously. Leaving aside the portrait-bust, their sculpture is no longer independent, but closely connected with architecture. It only serves to decorate the building, whilst the artist's individual style and the higher qualities of the work of art are kept in the background. This subordination is by no means necessitated by these conditions, for Ghiberti's St. Stephen and Donatello's St. George have not lost in intrinsic value as works of art, through having been specially worked for the niches at Or San Michele. No, the difference between the older and the later plastic art is not entirely due to the changed conditions, but to the superior talent of the older sculptors over their followers who, compared with their creative predecessors, are merely craftsmen of a high order.

Donatello's pupil Desiderio ranks highest amongst them in artistry and is the most independent of them all as sculptor. In strength he does not approach his master, but he surpasses him in his feeling for pure beauty, and in the expression of gracefulness and tenderness. Mino commenced as a stone-cutter and was led into the path of art by Desiderio. Bernardo Rossellino is above all an excellent architect, with inclination and talent for plastic form, which is more clearly evident with him, than say with the younger architect Giuliano da Sangallo (1445—1516), whose small decorative works we often meet in Florence. Antonio Rossellino is a pure sculptor, and chiefly his brother's pupil, though he was furthered by Desiderio da Settignano, near whom he should be placed in the list of sculptors. He is even more delicate and knows how to get the most exquisite nuances from the marble, in his

numerous circular Madonna reliefs as well as in his delightful busts of children. The most versatile of all is the youngest of this group, Benedetto da Majano. He is skilful in all that appertains to technique, and his best works are quite lovely in expression, though in his later work this is lost in generalization and conventionality. All these artists were much in request and supplied many



Fig. 135. Tomb of Bruni,  
by Bernardo Rossellino. S. Croce.

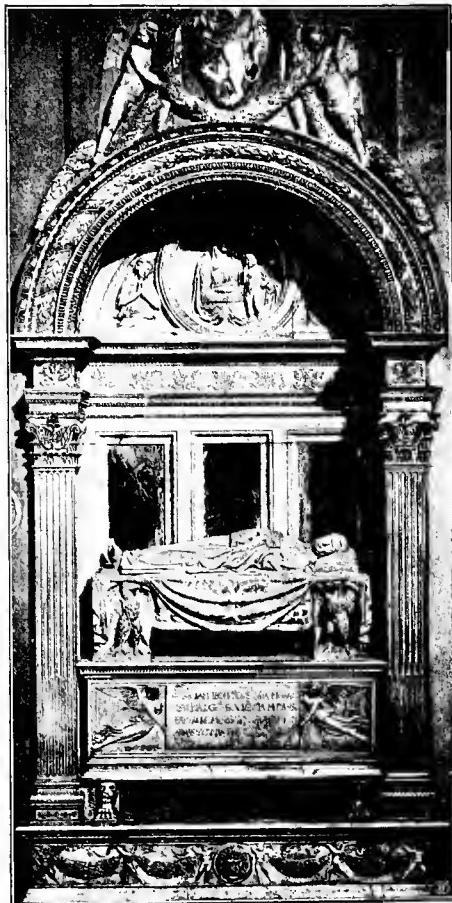


Fig. 136. Tomb of Marsuppini,  
by Desiderio da Settignano. S. Croce.

Tuscan towns and Rome with their works, though a number of important things have remained in Florence.

The tomb monument received their special attention and was given a novel, splendid form. In the arched niche, with a Madonna relief in the lunette, is the sarcophagus on a high socle, and above it the bier with the recumbent figure of the defunct. Small free statues are introduced in the architectural framework: figures holding garlands and armorial shields, mourning putti; and

all the ornamentation is exceedingly rich. The prototype was Donatello's tomb of John XXIII. in the Baptistry (fig. 10). Bernardino Rossellino showed most invention in this direction. The grand disposition of his tomb of Leonardo Bruni (d. 1444) in the right aisle of S. Croce indicated the future type of this class of monument, though nothing after it approached the touching figure of the defunct (fig. 135). But in the rest of the plastic decoration, the relief of the Madonna and two angels, and the two figures holding the coat-of-arms,

he remains far behind his successors who were better sculptors. A little later he created the very original and far less elaborate tomb of Beata Villani in S. Maria Novella (1451). Opposite Bruni's tomb in S. Croce is that of his successor in office, Marsuppini (d. 1455), by Desiderio da Settignano (fig. 136). It is lighter in composition, and more graceful in decoration. The putti with the shields on the socle, and the slender youths holding the wreaths at both sides of the arch, indicate the refined sculptor of women's and children's busts.

The third of the great Florentine niche-tombs is by Antonio Rossellino, and stands in S Miniato, in the Chapel of Prince John of Portugal (fig. 138).

Fig. 137. Pulpit, by Benedetto da Majano. S. Croce.

The pleasant young Cardinal had been very popular and his sudden death in 1459 caused general grief. Two years later Antonio was given the commission. The design is quite in harmony with the friendly character of the defunct. Two angels with a medallion of the Madonna float above the bier; two others kneel over the recumbent figure, whilst two nude putti have playfully wound themselves into the ends of the pall. All these decorative figures take part in the action, as it were, and the purely ornamental part is more varied and so distributed as to avoid empty spaces. Whilst in the other two tombs the high, straight wall above the sarcophagus produces a solemn effect and separates the image of the Madonna from the recumbent figure, everything is



closely connected in Antonio's work, and the niche is framed by the folds of a gathered curtain, like a cosy bedroom.

Antonio Rossellino's pupil *Benedetto da Majano* shows refined taste and wonderful skill in the treatment of marble on tabernacles, tombs and similar works, in which the figures produce a pleasing effect. His circular Madonna reliefs remind us of his artistic descent from Antonio and even from Desiderio. But his is no longer a personal or individual art, his chief aim is decorative effect, and his merit lies in his tectonic execution. His most famous work in Florence is the pulpit in S. Croce (fig. 137), which is probably of not much later date than his life-like bust of old Pietro Mellini at the Bargello (1474, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room 4; fig. 139). It is therefore a work of his zenith. The composition and construction are happy and beautiful. We can understand its genesis, if we remember Donatello's and Luca's Singing Galleries from the Cathedral. The five panels in relief with stories from the life of St. Francis are treated like painted pictures with receding planes and varying degrees of relief, so that the figures in front stand out as if they were worked in the round. The relations between plastic art and painting are now reversed: the vivacity and dainty beauty of these sculptured scenes can no longer supply any inspiration to the painters. Invention is exhausted in sculpture, and can now, about 1480, only be found in painting. The decorative tendency has made a craft of plastic art.

We feel this particularly in examining the work of *Mino da Fiesole*. His productiveness was incredible, and everywhere can be found his tombs and tabernacles, which are of very varying artistic merit. At an early period he came to Rome, where he spent a few years, transplanting this Florentine



Fig. 138. Tomb of the Cardinal of Portugal,  
by Antonio Rossellino. S. Miniato.

decorative art into the future home of the late Renaissance. His style became conventional; his slender figures have no individual life and are constant repetitions of the same type, so that his Madonna reliefs can be recognized immediately by their thin necks and small heads. We have already met Mino in the Badia (fig. 4), where he commenced the decoration with an altar for Diotisalvi Neroni, the faithless adviser of Piero Medici, who was exiled from Florence in 1466. Better works of his early period are in the Cathedral of Fiesole and in the Bargello, but we need not follow him in this direction. On the other hand we shall find, that he excels as portrait sculptor.

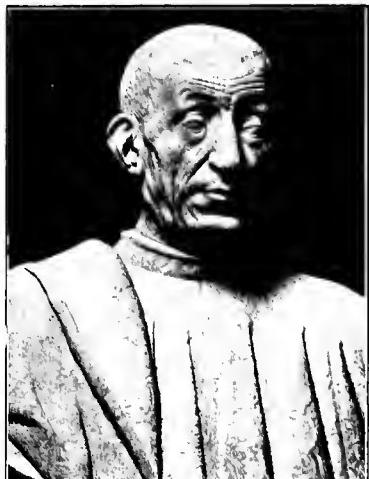


Fig. 139. Pietro Mellini, by Benedetto da Majano.  
Bargello No. 152.



Fig. 140. Matteo Palmieri, by Antonio Rossellino.  
Bargello No. 160.

Whilst the imaginative sculpture of this group degenerates into mannerism, the portraiture of the same men does not only retain vitality, but is further developed and prepares the way for the painters, for in painting the independent portrait is a rare occurrence about the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Sculptors in bronze and marble proceed from the statues or busts on the tombs of the dead to the independent portrait bust of the private patron. It is intended for the house, and necessarily of very simple form, without pedestal, simple in costume and in the whole conception. The men are generally shown in modest every-day attire, the women sometimes in daintily worked, patterned fabrics. The whole attention is thus concentrated on the strikingly realistic head, which is most individual in expression, but without pathos or emotion; only children are represented with laughing faces. This interest in the human

face is the heritage of the observant Florentine from the Etruscans and ancient Romans, in contradistinction to the Greeks, whose artists preferred to generalize the features, and to make the body more expressive than the face. The extreme limit of realism of the Florentine early Renaissance is demonstrated in the painted terra-cotta or stucco busts. This realism disappears with the advent of the late Renaissance, when grand impressions and more general effects are aimed at, and portraiture is left to the painters. The sculptured portrait loses its importance, and the greatest sculptor of that period, Michelangelo, is actually hostile to anything approaching portraiture.

The founder of Florentine portrait sculpture is Donatello, whose pupil Verrocchio continues this type of art. The sculptors in marble abandon



Fig. 141. Infant St. John, by Antonio Rossellino. Church of the Vanchettoni.



Fig. 142. Infant Christ, by Desiderio da Settignano. Church of the Vanchettoni.

Donatello's uncompromising, clear characterization for a more generally pleasing conception, with new traits of grace and pleasantness, which Donatello had purposely avoided. Most of their works have gone abroad, especially their finest portraits of women. But the Bargello collection contains some excellent busts of men (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, rooms 4 and 5). The earliest are by Mino: Piero de' Medici (234, fig. 46) and his brother Giovanni (236), both severe and strong, then on a smaller scale Rinaldo della Luna (235, dated 1461). Then follow Francesco Sassetti (147) and Matteo Palmieri (fig. 140, dated 1468) by Antonio Rossellino, and finally Pietro Mellini (1474), the donor of the pulpit in S. Croce, by Benedetto da Majano.

A special group, peculiar to Florence, is formed by the busts of young boys of noble families, represented as St. John or as the Infant Saviour. Donatello, to whom they were formerly all ascribed, is the inventor of this type,

but besides the pieces which are characteristic of his style, there are others of more pleasing conception and more delicate in the treatment of the marble, which are clearly the works of some of the younger masters. Proceeding from the authenticated works of Desiderio and Antonio Rossellino, modern critics have divided them between these two sculptors. Most of them, including above all some charming, laughing little heads, are now in foreign collections. In the Bargello (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room 5) are two busts of St. John, the larger-one by Desiderio (214), and the smaller-one by Rossellino (191); both are serious in expression. In the Church dei Vanchettoni is a serious St. John by Rossellino (fig. 141) and a small Christ with a roguish smile, by Desiderio (fig. 142); and in the Palazzo Martelli a smiling St. John by Rossellino. Besides these the Bargello has an interesting example of this class by Luca della Robbia: a coloured bust in glazed terra-cotta, representing a somewhat older curly-headed boy as Christ (Della Robbia room; fig. 143).



Fig. 143. Infant Christ, by Luca della Robbia.  
Bargello No. 75.

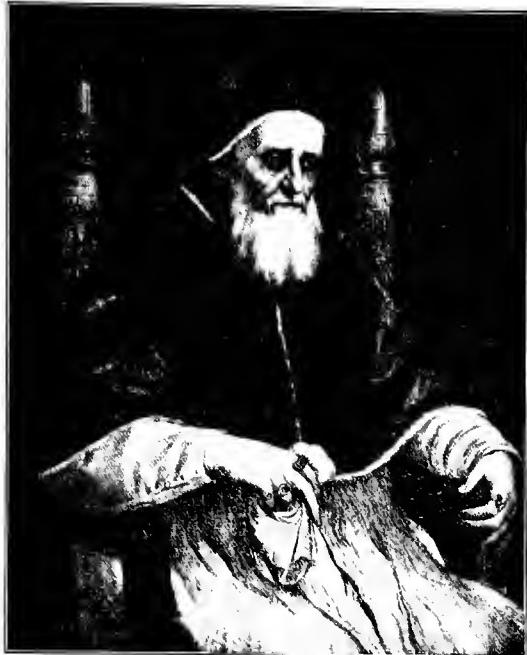


Fig. 144. Julius II., by Raphael. Pal. Pitti.

## XV. THE EXILE OF THE MEDICI (1494) AND THEIR RETURN (1512).

SAVONAROLA. BEGINNING OF THE LATE RENAISSANCE.  
MICHELANGELO AND LIONARDO. RAPHAEL AND PERUGINO.

WITH the death of Lorenzo de' Medici the period of foreign rule begins for Italy. Hitherto she had obeyed her own Lords, except in Naples, where the Aragonese had followed the Anjou. This condition was based on the balance of the leading powers. Naples, Milan, and Florence were of about equal strength, Venice much stronger, but inferior to a combination of the three—a fact which had prescribed a more or less peaceful policy to Lorenzo, Ferrante of Naples and Lodovico Sforza, directed towards the preservation of the *status quo*, and against the intriguing Venetian Republic. A change was bound to set in with the interference of a stronger foreign power, first France, then Spain and Germany, who in their struggle for the possession of Naples and Milan reduced the other states of Italy to powers of the second or third order.

Since the accession of Lorenzo's useless son Piero, *Savonarola* had become restless. His exciting and stirring Lenten sermons in 1494 predicted the approaching fall of the Medici. In the autumn Charles VIII. of France, summoned by Lodovico against Naples, invaded Italy at the head of an imposing army and took Naples almost without fighting. Savonarola's prediction was fulfilled. The king found the strongholds of Tuscany unguarded; Piero with his adherents was driven from Florence and died in exile in 1503. A new Greater Council was appointed and the burden of taxation placed on the shoulders of the wealthy. The Dominican prior's influence became paramount; he wanted to transform the Republic into a State of Christ and to introduce severe reforms in the private life of all. He exhorted the people to fight against worldliness; men of intellect and position became his adherents, artists changed their direction. Scriptural scenes of sorrow became the favourite motifs: the Descent from the Cross, the Pietà, and the Entombment. Savonarola finally attacked Pope Alexander VI. Borgia and his scandalous Court, and could defy him, since this just suited Charles VIII.'s Italian policy. The movement reached a climax with the solemn burning of the "vanities" on the Piazza della Signoria on Shrove Tuesday 1497. But Rome was bound to conquer. The Franciscans opposed Savonarola whose zealous adherents had aroused the hostility of the worldly, and in the same Piazza the monk's rule found an end in the flames which consumed his body.

Meanwhile the new French King, Louis XII., had claimed the Duchy of Milan, occupied the town in 1499, and in the following year sent the Moro to France as prisoner. Then he advanced further. Assisted by Alexander VI., whose son he had made Duke of Valentinois, and by his ally Ferdinand the Catholic of Spain, he re-conquered Naples in 1501, but was forced a few years later to leave the spoil to his faithless ally, whilst he himself devoted his undivided attention to making Milan secure. In these troubrous times Florence just saved herself by pursuing a cautious policy. Piero de' Medici and his younger brother Giuliano incited the terrible Caesar Borgia against the Republic which benefited by the excellent services rendered to her by Machiavelli, first a secretary to the Ten, since 1498, and then as envoy to Caesar, in 1502—3. With the death of the Pope ceased the threatening danger of his cruel son's rule.

The Florentines in 1502 had appointed *Piero Soderini*, Tommaso's son, gonfaloniere for life. He was not a great statesman, but his righteousness gained him the confidence of all, and his policy, which in all essentials was pro-French, steered the state through the dangers of the next few years. The new Pope *Julius II.* (1503—13) was energetic and warlike. He pursued a new plan, not based on nepotism, but on raising the Papal States to the rank of a great political power, by extending the frontiers beyond Perugia and Bologna and

by subduing the rulers of the smaller states. Cardinal Giovanni Medici wisely espoused this energetic Pope's side, patiently abiding his time and quietly nourishing the hope for the return of his family to Florence. A turn in the general war for the possession of Milan brought the realization of this hope. Julius II. was the least powerful of the chief actors in the drama, but he attained his end. He was allied with Louis XII., Ferdinand the Catholic and



Fig. 145. Madonna Relief, by Michelangelo.  
Casa Buonarrotti.



Fig. 146. Bacchus, by Michelangelo.  
Bargello.

Maximilian against Venice (by the League of Cambray, 1508). But when he found the growing influence of France more dangerous to Italy, than the growing power of Venice, he formed the "Holy League" with Venice and Spain (the Emperor joined a little later), with the object of expelling the French from Italy. In the following year this great object was achieved.

The epilogue was sad for the Florentines. Julius II. could not pardon them for having received the Council convoked by Louis XII. in their town of Pisa. A Spanish army invaded Tuscany and cruelly devastated Prato, in August



Fig. 147. Madonna, by Michelangelo. Bargello.

this day is the most impressive. The first work that occupied the youth of seventeen, perhaps whilst his patron Lorenzo de' Medici was still alive, is the Madonna and Child in the Casa Buona Rota, a sketchy study, quite in the character of the early Renaissance (fig. 145). The treatment of the low relief and part of the movement are reminiscent of Donatello, but the serious mother without a

1512. When it appeared before the gates of Florence, it was found useless to attempt resistance. In September Giuliano de' Medici was made the head of a *balia*, and the gonfaloniere Soderini was deposed. Machiavelli was tried on the suspicion of having taken part in a conspiracy against the Medici and retired definitely into private life. Julius II. died in February 1513, and was succeeded by Giovanni de' Medici, now Leo X.

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Of the three founders of the late Renaissance Leonardo is the oldest in years, but Michelangelo lived longest in Florence, where his art to



Fig. 148. Holy Family, by Michelangelo. Uffizi.

vestige of loveliness announces already the later Michelangelo. A new spirit is in the high relief of the Battle of the Centaurs, which is only a little later: strong, passionate movement, and a perfectly free style. The young artist had studied the reliefs on antique sarcophagi in the garden of S. Marco, and must have known a similar battle relief by his master Bertoldo, which is now at the Bargello. But everything is more natural and free with Michelangelo, and the dense mass

of bodies is dominated by the clear and almost architectural linear arrangement with a distinct centre and two sides in which the end figures represent so to speak upright posts.—At the age of nineteen he went to Bologna, where he was deeply impressed by the grandly conceived sculptures of an earlier quattrocentist, Jacopo della Quercia (d. 1438); then follows a short sojourn in Florence; then five years in Rome (till 1500), where he had ample opportunities of seeing antique sculpture. Three works in Florence—a statue, a relief, and a tempera picture—show us how the young artist had developed.

A by no means attractive Bacchus in the Bargello (fig. 146) was executed during his sojourn in Rome and has a superficial resemblance to the antique style, but the soft, fat body, faithfully copied from a model,<sup>1</sup> the unsteady walk and the dazed look of an enebriate, make us feel at once, that entirely new impressions of life and individuality seek here for expression in the guise of a mythological figure. The circular relief at the Bargello (fig. 147) is a more mature version of the Madonna and Child motif, than the Casa Buonarroti relief; like the other it is unfinished. The woman with the strong body and the melancholy, distant look, is a presentiment, as it were, of the Sibyls on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The Child has grown taller, stands on the ground and leans against His mother, as though He were tired; this is an innovation introduced by Michelangelo, after the conventional babe in the mother's lap. Finally the "Holy Family" in the Tribuna (fig. 148), built up in a pyramidal composition, has the effect of a work of sculpture. Again we are reminded of the Sistine ceiling. Nothing is pictorial; Michelangelo's instincts were those of a sculptor. In this picture, as in the Bargello relief, the circular shape is significant of his intentions: he does not wish to paint a church picture; his art from the outset is not hieratically restricted, but human and broad. Angelo Doni, who had ordered the picture, could not fall in with this unexpected conception of a Holy Family and tried to beat down the price, but the artist, convinced of the value of his work, demanded even more.

Florence.



Fig. 149. David, by Michelangelo.  
Academy.

But the statue in the round is always the true test of a sculptor's skill, and the *David* at the Academy (fig. 149) is Michelangelo's first masterpiece. After the exile of the Medici, Donatello's Judith had been taken from their palace and placed before the entrance to the Palazzo Vecchio, but a woman who had murdered a man was considered out of place in so important a position. On the other hand nothing could have been more suitable than the heroic youth who had delivered his people from the hands of the Philistines. Thus Michelangelo's David arose, not as an aesthetic plaything, but, like all great art, from serious thought. The young giant soon became a popular favourite.

His head was too big, his body slight, his hands and feet large—a boyish form, true to the model, but full of masculine vigour. His right hand is perhaps clasping a stone, his left holds the sling on his shoulder; his attitude is expectant, his expression keen and firm. The whole mental attitude is based on that of the body, in a way so far unapproached by any other sculptor. Think of Donatello's and of Verrocchio's David, and even of Donatello's St. George! But the whole appearance

Fig. 150. Adoration of the Magi, by Leonardo da Vinci. Uffizi.

—especially the attitude of the legs—is not yet beautiful and free in the sense of the late Renaissance. The David was ordered in 1501 by the Signory, and completed in 1504. A roughly blocked out colossal statue of St. Matthew at the Academy was intended for the façade of the Cathedral; it suggests already the Michelangelo of the Cinquecento in so far as the lines and planes of the marble block exceed human proportions.

To the same years, 1504 and 5, belongs his cartoon of a "Battle of Cascina" for the Hall of the Great Council, known to us only in parts from engravings; the actual painting was never commenced. It illustrated an incident in the Pisan war of 1364; and was just then most interesting and stimulating for the Florentines, as Pisa had again seceded and had to be reconquered at any price. *Lionardo da Vinci* was working at the same time on





Fig. 152. *Madonna del Cardellino*, by Raphael. Uffizi.



Fig. 151. *Madonna del Granduca*, by Raphael. Pal. Pitti.

his "Battle of Anghiari" for the same hall. Part of his cartoon, the famous "Fight for the Standard" was transferred to the wall, but then the work was abandoned (1506). Leonardo's cartoon remained for some time in the convent of S. Maria Novella, where it had been designed; then it disappeared, as did also the horsemen on the wall. Michelangelo's cartoon was taken to the Hall in 1505, where it was still to be seen in 1510; then it went to the Medici palace and perished by degrees. Michelangelo was now summoned to Rome



Fig. 153. *Madonna del Baldachino*, by Raphael. Pal. Pitti.

by Julius II. Leonardo only came to Florence as a visitor as it were; he had been to Milan at an early age (1481) and returned thither for some years in 1508. He died in France, in 1519, as Court painter to the King. His only picture in Florence is an unfinished "Adoration of the Magi" (Tribuna; fig. 150). The figures are full of life and arranged in an entirely new manner; the few architectural remains are moved into the background. Probably this interesting work is connected with the commission for S. Donato, and must have been painted before 1496, when Filippino's picture, which was painted to replace it, was finished (pag. 148).

Not long before Michelangelo's departure, in 1504, Raphael came to Florence, where he remained, with short breaks, for four years, until he removed to Rome in 1508. He knew all that the Umbrian School could teach him, and had outdistanced his master Perugino. In Florence he started again as apprentice, and his art developed under the influence of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Fra Bartolommeo. The chief result is the new conception of the Madonna picture which terminates more than a century's work in this direction by the artists of Florence. His earliest effort, the *Madonna del Granduca* (fig. 151) already combines the softness of the Umbrian devotional picture with the firm drawing of his Florentine style. She is seen standing like a column, three-quarter length, not seated or only a bust, like most of his Umbrian Madonnas: she does not play with the child, like the worldly mother of the subsequent pictures. The technique—of course in oil—is fluent and very sure. The *Madonna del Cardellino* (fig. 152) represents the affectionate mother, the worldly cultured woman, and by her side, standing as with Michelangelo, the well developed Child and His playmate St. John. The triangular composition is the invention of Leonardo and Fra Bartolommeo, with whom Raphael was well acquainted. A wedding present for a Florentine, the picture has as background a Florentine landscape, with the sparse Spring foliage which we find in Umbrian pictures. Raphael has treated the same subject in two other pictures, now at the Vienna gallery and at the Louvre, but the Uffizi version deserves the first place, in spite of its damaged condition.

The third Madonna by Raphael in Florence is quite different in character: it is a solemn church picture, a *Santa Conversazione* of the kind that was known before his time, but in the spirit of the late Renaissance, in the serious, severe style of Fra Bartolommeo, without whom the St. Peter on the left and the



Fig. 154. Maddalena Doni, by Raphael (?). Pal. Pitti.

two angels before the throne of this "Madonna of the Baldachino" (fig. 153) could hardly have existed. On his departure for Rome, Raphael left this picture unfinished, and the entire upper portion with the flying angels, and probably the St. Augustine on the right, were added much later by his pupils.

As Florentine portraitist we can perhaps study Raphael in the portraits of Angelo and Maddalena Doni (fig. 154), of which the former is the best. The woman has not a pleasant face, and is a little stiff and unattractive; Lionardo's



Fig. 155. "Sister Doni", by Raphael (?). Uffizi.

technique are more perfect. If it is by Raphael, it must have been painted about the end of his sojourn in Florence. If he is responsible for the "Donna Gravida" of the Pitti, it must certainly be placed in his early period.

Raphael met again in Florence his old teacher Pietro Perugino (1446 to 1524), who was then long past his prime. Perugino had been in Florence long ago, when Verrocchio had his Bottega, and had met Lionardo who was only six years his junior. The Florentines had received him with interest, because he introduced the soulful expression and serenity of the Umbrian School into the forcible, illustrative style of the Florentines, and was moreover dexterous and well trained in all technical methods. He was the first of the Umbro-

Mona Lisa was the model for the arrangement. Since we know that the real Maddalena was baptised in 1489, and was thus only eighteen in 1507, the picture cannot be her portrait, and both it and its companion lose their credentials as genuine works of Raphael. But they are unmistakable pictures of the early Florentine Renaissance. They have not the masterly sureness of say the Verrocchio by Lorenzo di Credi, or the Francesco delle Opere (1494), probably by Perugino, both at the Uffizi. The woman's portrait is in every respect surpassed by the "Sister Doni" in the Tribuna, which also follows the arrangement of the Mona Lisa (fig. 155).

The face is full of sympathy, and both expression and tech-

Florentines to replace tempera by oil-colours for easel pictures. He was in his prime at the age of about fifty, when he painted the fresco at S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi (fig. 89), but soon passed his zenith and made a trade of his art. In Florence are a few oil paintings of his best period. The Pietà of 1498 at the Pitti is a beautiful triangular composition, moderately animated, not exactly deep in expression, but pleasantly serious, and exceedingly fine in colour, especially for this early date. Three of his pictures should be noted at the Academy: the "Gethsemane" of about the same period, for the fine feeling of the evening landscape (fig. 156); the somewhat earlier and very severe Pietà (third room, 56); and a large and rather conventional "Ascension" with four saints, painted about 1500.



Fig. 156. Gethsemane, by Perugino. Academy.



Fig. 157. Leo X. and two Cardinals, by Raphael. Pal. Pitti.

## XVI. MEDICEAN POPES.

PALAZZO PANDOLFINI. THE PAINTERS OF THE LATE RENAISSANCE:  
FRA BARTOLOMMEO AND ANDREA DEL SARTO.

**I**TALY had seen two terrible men on the throne of St. Peter. When Leo X. (1513—21) was elected, he was believed to be harmless (fig. 157). He was neither warlike, nor malicious; he loved life and was fond of merry faces. Of his brother Giuliano his father, when comparing his three sons, had said that he was good, and this may have been comparatively true. Whilst he lived he would not allow his Papal brother to depose the Duke of Urbino, because years ago he had been kindly received as exile at his court. He was really a weakling with the character of a spy, the soul of all intrigues from which Florence had hitherto suffered. He now followed the Pope to Rome, leaving the government of Florence in the hands of his nephew Lorenzo, Piero's son. Shortly before his death (1516) he was made Duke of Nemours

by the King of France. Uncle and nephew are the unworthy heroes of the monument which Michelangelo was shortly to erect by order of the Medicean Popes.

Florence was henceforth a dependency of the Curia, almost completely governed from Rome; the Medicean Pope gave his orders to the successive members of his family residing in Florence. Young Lorenzo was terribly proud, but without real ambition, unimportant like his father Piero and a bad soldier, though Leo X. gave him a command against Modena (1515). Such



Fig. 158. Vision of St. Bernard, by Fra Bartolommeo. Academy.

he appeared as pretender of Urbino. Whilst Pope Julius II. was alive, his nephew Duke Francesco Maria of Urbino had felt secure under his protection. In August 1516 Leo X. invested Lorenzo with the Duchy which he had formerly intended for his brother Giuliano, but the new Duke could not conquer his domain; Francesco Maria defeated him repeatedly, but subsequently took to flight voluntarily, and did not return until after the Pope's death. In 1518 Lorenzo married a French Countess of almost Royal rank and died the following year of a revolting illness, five days before his wife whom he had infected. Their child was Catherine de Medicis, who became notorious as Queen of France. Lorenzo's successor in Florence was Cardinal Giulio, afterwards Pope Clement VII., the elder Giuliano's illegitimate son.

Leo's X. policy was anti-French from the outset. He was therefore filled with terror, when a new King, the mobile and warlike Francis I., suddenly took Milan after a rapid victory over the Swiss at Marignano (1515). But he soon gathered his wits, went to Bologna, and concluded a treaty in 1516. Three years later a man of greater power appeared on the scene: young Charles V. who ruled over Spain and the domains of the Habsburgs and immediately advanced the claims of his house on Milan and Naples. He expelled the French from Milan, and established Francesco Sforza, the second son of the Moro, in 1521.

Leo X. had come to an understanding with Charles V., and Cardinal Giulio actually entered Milan with the Royal army. In the midst of his success and hopes the Pope died of a fever on Dec. 1. He had not achieved great things, and could not be compared with Julius II., but he at least retained the semblance of power and influence, which was lost by his successors. Adrian VI. of Utrecht, Charles' former teacher, died already in September 1523. He was succeeded



Fig. 159. Marriage of St. Catherine, by Fra Bartolommeo.  
Pal. Pitti.

by the Medici Pope Clement VII., who ruled until 1534. Clement was as wise as Leo, learned and intelligent, experienced and industrious, but undecided and ever anxious to replace some good idea by a better one.

The French had again invaded Upper Italy in 1523 and were beaten by Charles V.: Francis I. was captured at Pavia (1525) and had to renounce his claims on Italy in the peace of Madrid, 1526. The supremacy of the German King was established for good. Under these circumstances the Pope ought to have sided with Charles V. and with the Spaniards whom Alexander VI. had brought to Naples, Julius II. to Central Italy, whom Leo X. had finally

assisted in Milan, and who, in their turn, had led the Medici back to Florence in 1512. But it was contrary to the Papal policy to leave Milan to the power that owned Naples. Hence Clement's inclination towards France. He had gone personally to Milan, before the battle of Pavia, and now absolved his ally, the French King, from the obligations of the Madrid treaty. Punishment immediately followed this first step of his independent policy: Rome was stormed and sacked by the Germans and Spaniards in May 1527, and the Pope besieged in the castle of S. Angelo. Clement waited to see, if the French would recuperate and assist him. But when their position became increasingly



Fig. 160. Pietà, by Fra Bartolommeo. Pal. Pitti.

hopeless, he came to an understanding with Charles V. at Barcelona (June 1529), and in August peace was made with France at Cambrai. Francis I. was permanently excluded from the Italian sphere of interest, and the German King received all he wanted. Naples was handed over unconditionally—Milan became his in 1535 after the death and by the will of the last Sforza—and the Pope had to place the Imperial crown upon his head at Bologna, in February 1530. Charles V.'s supremacy in Italy was now unassailable.

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With Michelangelo and Raphael the further developement of the *late Renaissance* is transferred to Rome. In sculpture Michelangelo takes the lead. Whatever others created under his influence in Florence is of little importance, compared with the works of the great past. Michelangelo's Medici statues

will occupy our attention at the end of this book. Of more importance is the architecture of the later palaces, although the decisive developments took place in Rome, the cradle of baroque architecture. We have already seen that Michelangelo on one occasion returns to Florence and is occupied with the façade of the Library of S. Lorenzo. Of the other architects we must at least mention the most skilful: Baccio d'Agnolo (d. 1543), Ammanati (d. 1593) and

Buontalenti (d. 1608). All their works are surpassed in beauty by the Palazzo *Pandolfini*, built 1516—20 after Raphaels plans. The small building with a front of only four windows is very effective and important. The corners are in rustica and a splendid cornice surmounts a high frieze with an inscription. The windows, between half columns on the upper storey and between pilasters on the ground floor, have alternating arched and triangular pediments, a device borrowed from late Roman architecture and till then only used on churches. When Baccio d'Agnolo first adopted it in 1520 for his Palazzo Bartolini (near S. Trinità), it gave rise to a satirical poem. The architecture of the late Renaissance never reached full development in Florence.



Fig. 161. Visitation, by Albertinelli. Uffizi.

If pictorial art fared better, it was because Leonardo's life took a different course from Michelangelo's and Raphael's. He was attracted to the North, and not to Rome, whither crowds of Florentine artists had flocked since the days of the early Renaissance. And if he never felt quite at home in Florence after his first sojourn in Milan, his artistic progeny remained active in Florence. The intensely serious *Fra Bartolommeo* (1475—1517) and the worldly *Andrea del Sarto* (1486—1531) never went to Rome. The one studied with Cosimo Rosselli, the other with Piero di Cosimo; then they both fell under the influence of Leonardo, and—together with Franciabigio, Pontormo, Puligo and Bugiardini—brilliantly complete the list of Florentine painters. They can only

be properly appreciated in Florence, where their pictures have remained with but few exceptions.

Fra Bartolommeo's art is religious and severe. He was one of the adherents of Savonarola, after whose death he joined the Dominican order. After 1501 he lived at and worked for S. Marco. He has not painted any profane subjects or nudes, except some charming putti which, however, always retain a certain seriousness. At an early period he gave up landscape backgrounds and replaced them by simple, grandly conceived architecture. His first work on a large scale, a fresco for the hospital of S. Maria Nuova, now in the Uffizi and badly damaged, shows in its upper part (the lower part is painted by his friend Albertinelli) "Christ as Judge" surrounded by angels' heads, at His sides Mary and the Apostles with serious, noble heads and broadly arranged masses of drapery. Subsequently he took up oil-painting and, based on Leonardo and the Venetians, developed his own technique by means of broad modelling of light and shade. With Leonardo the deepest secret of his effect lies in the infinitely subtle, suggestive line; with Andrea del Sarto the chief charm is the vaporous mellowness of tone; in Fra Bartolommeo's work the most conspicuous feature is the plastic firmness of the bodies, which is almost sculpturesque and brings him near Michelangelo. He never sounds the depth of the Umbrian soul, like Raphael, and he avoids emotional subjects. His majestic coolness cannot affect us deeply. But when the overflowing, sincere objectivity of the quattrocento had to be pressed into the measured forms of a grand, religious style and of an obligatory worldly elegance, Fra Bartolommeo's pompous monumentality was not without great importance. Raphael's early works and all Andrea del Sarto's could not be conceived without him. But subsequently both surpass him by a long way. The "Vision of St. Bernard" of 1506 (Ac-



Fig. 162. Annunciation, by Albertinelli. Academy.

demy; fig. 158), his first picture after he had taken orders, has certain traits of fervour, but at the same time the laboriously arranged diversity of the figures is distinctly comical. The St. Anna with ten patron saints of Florence (Uffizi No. 1265), which was destined for the great hall of the Palazzo Vecchio, and on which he was working in 1512, was never advanced beyond the brown under-painting. The "Marriage of St. Catharine" at the Pitti (fig. 159) was painted in 1512 and should be compared with Raphael's Madonna del Baldachino. At the Pitti Gallery is also the *Salvator Mundi*, of 1516, with two saints at either



Fig. 163. Annunciation, by Andrea del Sarto. Pal. Pitti.

side of the Saviour who has risen from the tomb, in front of which are two putti holding emblems. In his last work he is more dramatic and deeper in feeling. This *Pietà* (fig. 160) sets as much the standard for the representation of its subject, as does Leonardo's Last Supper or Raphael's Entombment. The arrangement is severe, but of great intrinsic beauty. The Saviour, who shows no trace of His past agony, is held in a sitting position by the kneeling St. John whose figure clearly expresses a physical effort. Mary's grief is subdued—a farewell, a last kiss. The Magdalen is in despair, but her face is hardly to be seen. Her unbeautiful silhouette balances the St. John on the other side of the composition. Behind her were originally the figures of SS. Peter and Paul, which were however subsequently removed. The background contains the mere suggestion of a landscape at night. The stem of the cross is a later

addition. Michelangelo's strength and Raphael's soulful beauty seem to be united in this Pietà.

His friend *Albertinelli* (1474—1515) was no heaven-born genius, but a capable, serious artist, who worked in partnership with Fra Bartolommeo, even after the latter had taken orders. The pictures in which they collaborated are sometimes signed with a special monogram. In Albertinelli's finest work, the "Visitation" of 1503 (Uffizi; fig. 161), the merit of the wonderful grouping of the two figures is the more remarkable, as the picture belongs to the artist's



Fig. 164. Disputation, by Andrea del Sarto. Pal. Pitti.

early period. The open hall recalls Perugino, whom he also approaches sometimes in the expression of his heads. The severe and dignified Holy Trinity on a gold background, and the Annunciation, an architectural *tour de force*, with a glory of angels in the upper part of the picture (fig. 162), were painted in 1510 and are now both at the Academy.

The lower part of this Annunciation inspired *Andrea del Sarto's* version of the same subject (fig. 163), painted in 1512; the group is reversed. The colours of the picture have suffered, but we still get the full impression of Andrea's sure touch, and of his somewhat cold elegance which covers his shallow sentiment like a fine garment. The principal figures have great charm, but not

much soul. David watches the bathing Bathsheba from a late Renaissance balcony with a background of Roman ruins. The scriptural story is rendered in a classic style of beauty which would have suited any worldly scene. This pleasing picture is typical of all Andrea's art. As a colourist he reaches the highest summit and is as independent in fresco, as in oil-painting. In the range of his invention he far surpasses Fra Bartolommeo and can almost be compared with Leonardo and Raphael. In addition to this he was a surprisingly



Fig. 165. *Madonna delle Arpie*, by Andrea del Sarto. Uffizi.

prolific worker, though his activity extended over barely twenty years. No less than eighteen of his works are at the Pitti Palace. The best is a Disputation of six saints, four standing and two kneeling, painted against a plain dark background. Everything is perfect in this picture, the spiritual connection, the faces and the expressive hands; whilst the linear composition and the pictorial quality are absolutely incomparable (fig. 164). Almost equally excellent is the Madonna of 1517, at the Uffizi, called *delle arpie* from the figures at the corners of the altar-like pedestal (fig. 165). Grand like a statue, the proud woman carries without effort the heavy child; two putti cling to her robes. The two saints, who are almost in profil, are full of life and movement.

Though Andrea produced some fine works to his very end, his late years mark a decline. His always meagre stock of types received no additions, his movements were repeated, and his conscious skill changed into mere routine, as even his contemporaries noticed regretfully. The Pitti collection contains a few examples of this period. The Pietà of 1523 was painted five years after Fra Bartolommeo's, and Andrea was well acquainted with the much older version by Perugino. Compared with both these, Andrea's is meaningless and superfluous; it is painted without sympathy, the character of grief being only expressed by the actions of the hands. The popular half-figure of the boy Baptist is likewise a work of Andrea's decline and is moreover ruined by the restorer (fig. 166).

Andrea's art, his aims and intentions, and also his limitations, appear most clearly in the frescoes in grisaille of the small court at the *Chiostro dello Scalzo*. These twelve scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist were commenced in 1511 with the "Baptism of Christ", and completed in 1526 with "The Angel appearing to Zacharias". "The Departure of John" and "His Meeting with Christ" were painted by Franciabigio during Andrea's absence in France (1518—19). Compared with quattrocento representations Andrea's have fewer figures and more space; the figures require therefore more intensity of expression in their attitudes and movements: everything is more natural, free, and animated. But artistic composition is Andrea's chief concern, and all the component parts are subordinated to it. Since he is neither very dramatic, nor has much spiritual depth of feeling, we can only enjoy the beautiful form into which his free style has clothed his subjects. Between the stories from the life of St. John he has painted four allegorical figures in niches. They might be called painted works of sculpture, for Andrea's art is at times, and particularly in these figures, so distinctly sculpturesque, that it constitutes a link between him and Michelangelo. A glance at the "Charity" (fig. 167) will best explain this trait.

Florence.



Fig. 166. St. John the Baptist, by Andrea del Sarto.  
Pal. Pitti.

One of Andrea's late works is a fresco of the "Last Supper" at S. Salvi, a bold enterprise after Leonardo's rendering of this theme, but comparison would here be out of place. Though this painting again shows his well known weakness for repeating the same features in two faces, the figures are on the whole individual and full of life, and the whole scene is rendered with convincing seriousness. After the Scalzo frescoes the "Last Supper" appears almost realistic, and this must have been felt even more strongly by his contemporaries.



Fig. 167. Charity, by Andrea del Sarto. Scalzo.



Fig. 168. Alessandro de' Medici, by Bronzino. Uffizi.

## XVII. FLORENCE AS MEDICEAN DUCHY.

### MICHELANGELO'S TOMBS OF THE MEDICI.

ITALY was much surprised, when Clement VII., after the deep wounds inflicted upon him by the Emperor's power, not only thought of immediate peace, but threw himself into the arms of his erstwhile adversary. But the Pope had to take his opportunity. He saw that further resistance would be reckless folly, and tried at least to save for his family whatever could be saved. This family then consisted of two youths who had been educated in Florence according to his instructions by high dignitaries of the Church and had escaped in 1527 from the German soldiers marching on Rome. These degenerate Medici were now living in Rome, and Clement could only obtain permission for their return to Florence through the good will of Charles V., who had given his consent on the conclusion of peace.

*Alessandro*, the bastard of the younger Lorenzo and of a negro slave, carried the stamp of his descent in the animal-like features of his coarse face and was at an early age already a confirmed debauchee (fig. 168). For two years he had been living in idle retirement, with the title of a Duke of Penna. Very

different was the nature of *Ippolito*, an illegitimate son of Giuliano of Nemours and a lady of Urbino. He was highly gifted, a man of the world, ambitious, with a pronounced leaning towards soldiering. It was his deepest grief, that his papal cousin had made him enter the Church and would not give him dispensation from his vow. At eighteen he became Cardinal (1529), then Archbishop of Avignon and Vice-Chancellor of the Church; in 1530 he went to the Emperor as papal legate, to make him declare war against Sultan Soliman. Titian painted him soon after in the costume of a Hungarian magnate, which he used to wear in the camp of the Imperial Court at Bologna (Pitti 201). All his contemporaries have pronounced Cardinal Ippolito to have been an interesting personality. His excesses were only natural for a man of his period and position. It is most peculiar, that he was always hatching conspiracies and even constructed infernal machines, professedly to be used against his cousin Alessandro. He could not forget that his school-fellow had been preferred to him as Duke of Florence, and when Alessandro at the age of twenty died a sudden death at Itri, Ippolito was generally suspected of having removed him by poison.

Five years before this event took place, Florence was to be conquered by Spanish troops for these Medici, and had to endure the hardships of a siege. In August 1530, after ten months' resistance, she fell by treason. Michelangelo's share in the defence of his native town was subsequently considerably exaggerated. The Pope was not a gracious conqueror, but his punishments were meted out by the provisional government, so that his family should escape public hatred. The new Signore, the "Duke of Penna" did not appear before June 1531, and in October the Imperial decree arrived from Augsburg, which bestowed upon him the hereditary title of a Duke of Florence. The Signory was abolished and a Constitution worked out by the best men in Florence: the historians Guicciardini and Francesco Vettori, then Bartolommeo Valori and Filippo Strozzi who soon after succumbed to his tragic fate as head of the *fuorusciti* (pag. 128). All that need be said of the new Duke is, that he was ever after the women of Florence, and that a few months before his death the Emperor gave him his illegitimate daughter Margaret as wife.

His end was adventurous, like his life. One night in January 1537 a companion of his excesses, Lorenzino, a Medici of the younger line, induced him to come to his house and stabbed him with the assistance of a professional murderer. There was really no reason for the foul deed, for Lorenzino had been on the friendliest terms with his cousin, but his head was a little turned, and even as a boy he had knocked the heads off some antique statues in Rome, and ill-chosen books had quite confused his mind, until he gradually began to fancy himself in the part of murderer of a tyrant. He had to wander from town to town, to Paris and to Constantinople, "with a price on

his back" — *addosso una taglia* — a price of 7000 scudi, which had been placed on his head by Cosimo I., and which two expert rogues earned after eleven years in Venice (1547). Before his death he had published a bombastic apology of his cowardly murder and had been hailed by Filippo Strozzi as a Tuscan Brutus. For Cosimo's party he always remained *il traditore*.

Clement VII. had preceded his two nephews in death (1534). Grief over their conduct was believed to have been the cause of his death. His last years were not relieved by any joyful events. He inclined again towards France and furthered, after 1533, the engagement of his grandniece Catherine with the King's second son, but the King could not be of much use to him, and the Emperor's power was unshakable. The Duchy vacated by Alessandro's assassination was claimed in January 1537 by the eighteen years old Cosimo, a cousin twice removed of Lorenzino. Assisted by the leader of the *Optimati*, the intriguing Cardinal Cibò, he gained for his cause some influential statesmen, like Guicciardini, Vettori, and Matteo Strozzi, and declared himself "Lord of the City and of the surrounding Country". But after the cruel suppression of the patriots under Filippo Strozzi, he shook off his troublesome helpers, and ruled alone, at first as an obedient vassal of the Emperor who confirmed his Ducal title. He was not without ability. In the government of his country he achieved important results, and surrounded himself with a court of artists, the best known of whom was Vasari. But the story of his life is outside our task; from the human point of view he was a monster.

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Through an irony of fate the greatest achievement of the world's greatest sculptor glorifies the two least important members of the Medici family: Giuliano of Nemours, who never had a vestige of fame during his life, and Lorenzo of Urbino, an insignificant ne'er-do-well. After Lorenzo's death (1519) Cardinal Giulio came to terms with Michelangelo about a burial-vault at S. Lorenzo, the "New Sacristy", which was to contain monuments to four of the Medici — Lorenzo il Magnifico, his grandfather Cosimo, and the two recently deceased members of the family. When Leo died, the household was exhausted, and the new Pope Clement VII. required Michelangelo for other tasks. His scheme had to be curtailed; the two monuments for the elder Medici were abandoned, and two less elaborate tombs for the two Dukes decided upon. Michelangelo had made considerable progress with the monuments before the siege. He took the work up again in 1530, but without pleasure and with the help of assistants, just to satisfy Clement and the Florentine Medici, on whom he and his family were dependent. Matters changed after the Pope's death in 1534. Michelangelo, who happened to be in Rome, never returned

to Florence. He was no longer obliged to work for the Medici and left the monuments to the Florentine artists, who only put them up at a much later date (fig. 169—170), when the chapel received its final decoration in white and grey by Vasari. The disposition of the figures was certainly in accordance with Michelangelo's intentions, as far as these could be ascertained. It cannot even be said that the disproportion between the short sarcophagi and

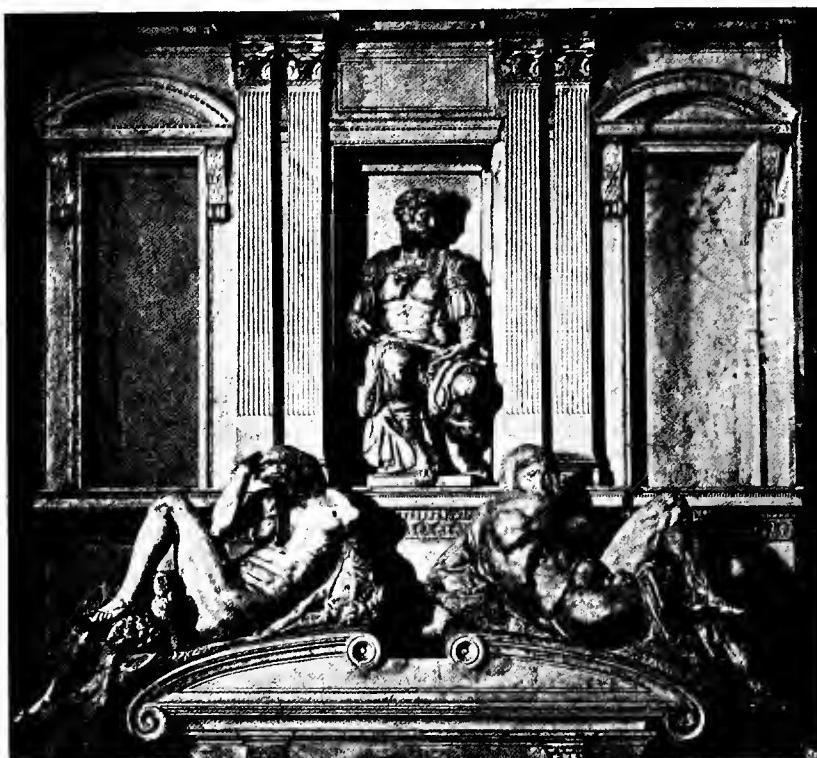


Fig. 169. New Sacristy of S. Lorenzo. Giuliano de' Medici between Night and Day.

the four large allegorical figures was against his will. This disproportion results in the sculpture overbalancing the architecture, in consequence of which the heads recklessly break through the lines of the moulding. The whole composition is novel and arbitrary. The Dukes are seated in shallow niches, flanked by pairs of pilasters, and so narrow, that there is scarcely room for the figures. This impression is counteracted by the empty side-niches which are crowned by pediments. In front of these are the reclining figures on the jutting sarcophagi, so that each statue with its pair of figures forms a triangular composition.

The allegorical figures replace the customary mourning Virtues; originally upright figures of Heaven and Earth and two reclining Rivers were intended for Giuliano's monument. The reclining pose was found preferable to the upright, because it affords a better contrast to the seated figure and is better suited for the expression of movement. The personification of the four parts of the day permitted a more subtle differentiation of expression, an entirely new characterization, which has invested these impersonal beings with the chief accent for the effect of the whole. The "Night", which has always excited

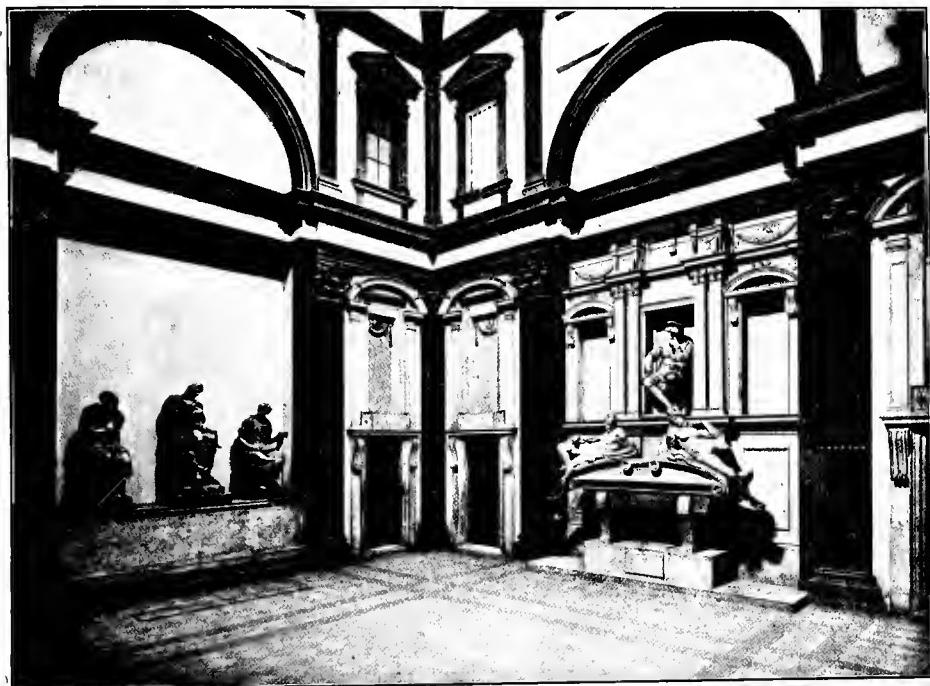


Fig. 170. New Sacristy of S. Lorenzo. The Madonna between the Medicean Patron Saints, and Lorenzo de' Medici between Morning and Evening.

most admiration, is represented older than the "Morning", and has fallen asleep, tired and worn, whilst "Morning" is just awaking from peaceful slumber. "Day", a veritable Hercules in body, is in an attitude of irritation, as it were, with an angry, sudden movement of the sketchy head. "Evening", the companion of the gentle Aurora, is settling down in lassitude, with the sole expression of quiet comfort. The Day and Night, which are the least finished of the figures, were probably the artist's last work.

The two Medici are represented in sitting posture, as on many an earlier tomb, notably of the Gothic period, in antique captain's garb, and without the slightest attention to portraiture; Lorenzo, f. i., was in reality a bearded man.

Michelangelo, who altogether had no sense of portraiture, did not feel obliged to give a faithful likeness. He only wanted to represent two men of noble family and high military rank, two "captains", just as his Moses has been called "captain of the Hebrews". Giuliano, with the commander's staff of the General of the Church, sharply turns his bared head to the side. Lorenzo's face is shaded by a helmet and inclined towards his supporting hand. His pensive expression has become famous (*il pensoso* or *pensieroso*,—*penseroso* is Milton's invention). The attitudes are reminiscent of older motifs, of his Moses and Jeremiah. It is the last important work, in which the sculptor Michelangelo has expressed his deep seriousness, and into which he has put all the passion of his soul. At an early time it was already thought, that he wanted to express a deeper, objective meaning, which could not have been grief over liberty enslaved, since the essential parts of the statues were created before the fall of the Republic. And so it is tried again and again to attribute to him deep grief for the deceased Dukes and to clothe it in the most touching language. As though these two miserable Princes could have stirred the depths of his heart! The quite conventional expression of grief was really quite unnecessary, as has been proved by many a Greek and early Renaissance tomb. But we cannot imagine smiling youths and playful *putti* of the Desiderio da Settignano type on a tomb by Michelangelo, and this should be decisive. His art is always serious, and the melancholy, with which his figures are invested, is the heritage of their birth, and the disposition of his soul—in a word *his* style.

On the third wall, facing the altar, is only an unfinished Madonna by Michelangelo, a work full of animation and suggestion of movement. The remains of Lorenzo the Magnificent and of his brother, the elder Giuliano, were at a later date interred under the pedestal of this group; in 1895 they were placed in new sarcophagi. At the sides of the Madonna are seated the Medicean patron saints, Damianus and Cosmas, by two of Michelangelo's fellow-workers, Montelupo and Montorsoli.

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